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Portrait of a Kshatriya.

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THE

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THE HINDOOS.

Chapter IX.

REMARKABLE CUSTOMS, &c.

In continuing our view of Hindoo manners we find numerous customs and practices too remarkable to be passed over, essential, in fact, to the proper comprehending of the character of the people, which, nevertheless, could not, with facility, be classed under any of the preceding heads. Of these some may have been already referred to, slightly, while investigating other matters, for the purpose of proof or illustration; but this is insufficient: they deserve to be viewed, not with a glance, as it were, in passing, but calmly, attentively, deliberately, as forming important portions of a picture than which humanity offers nothing more striking or wonderful.

We have spoken of marriage, among the Brahmins as well as among the other classes of the people, and described, perhaps too minutely, the ceremonies with which the Hindoos, in compliance with the orders of their legislators, continue to celebrate it. But there exists in Bengal a particular tribe of Brahmins, who conduct their marriages in a manner different from that which prevails among other members of the same caste. The history of this tribe is as follows. Formerly there existed in Bengal but one order of Brahmins,

called *Satsati*, all of whom were equal in honour. There was consequently no powerful rivalry to stimulate to exertion, whether in virtue or learning, and the whole caste insensibly sank into sloth and ignorance. For some time this state of things continued undisturbed. But at length a prince arose, who, incensed at their indolence and incapacity, and wishing to offer up by pious and skilful hands a sacrifice which he designed to solemnize for obtaining rain, invited from a neighbouring state five Brahmins of learning and virtue, capable of conducting the ceremony in a becoming manner. Their performance satisfied the monarch, who, as a reward, gave them grants of land; and from these five men, nearly all the Brahmins now in Bengal are supposed to be descended. Nearly the same thing, however, happened to their posterity as had happened to the Satsatis: ignorance, the vice which most easily besets mankind, intent, for the most part, on vulgar acquisitions, again crept in, and a second reform became necessary. Ballâlsêna, therefore, king of Bengal, observing among the Brahmins a great lukewarmness in the performance of their religious duties, determined to divide them into three orders, distinguishing one as a peculiar order of merit, to entitle a man to enter which the following qualifications were required: to observe the duties of the caste, to be meek, learned, of good report, to possess a disposition to visit the holy places, to be devout, not to desire gifts from the impure, to delight in an ascetic life, and to be liberal and beneficent. Those in whom these nine qualities were found he denominated *Kulînas;* those who possessed some, but were wanting in other qualities, were called *Srotriyas;* while those in whom none of these signs of superiority could be discovered were termed *Vansajas.*

The distinctions thus created, and which still continue to be observed with great tenacity, have give

rise to the greatest enormities. A Kulîna may lawfully give his son in marriage to the daughter of a Srotriya, or even to a Vansaja; but, in the second case, on condition that his family, if the practice be continued, shall sink to the level of the Vansaja. This danger, however, he generally confronts with great readiness for a certain consideration; and the Srotriyas and Vansajas, vehemently ambitious of forming connexions with the privileged class, consent to expend enormous sums of money to obtain Kulîna husbands for their daughters. For this reason, the male youth of this class are generally engaged as soon as born to women of the inferior tribes. But the contriver of the rules, by which these people regulate their conduct, neglected to provide for the daughters of Kulînas, who are forbidden to marry out of their class, and, unless very wealthy, can find no husbands in it. They therefore remain unmarried. Polygamy, itself an evil, is frequently resorted to as a remedy to the inconvenience resulting from this arrangement. The Kulina Brahmin, solicited and courted on all sides, marries a number of wives, some from his own class, to gratify his friends, others from among the inferior classes, through considerations of interest, to enrich himself, or to provide for himself a home in various parts of the country, where he may be lodged and entertained without expense during his peregrinations from one place of pilgrimage to another. The women of his own class he commonly leaves at the houses of their friends; of the others he generally takes one to his own house, when he happens to possess one. But very frequently all his worldly possessions consist only of a shred of cloth and his Brahminical string, by the magic influence of which, however, he sometimes possesses a harem of a hundred and twenty ladies scattered over Bengal, each of whom is proud to call him husband, and looks forward to his distant

and uncertain visit as to a season of rejoicing and jubilee. Numbers convert these kinds of marriages into a profitable speculation, and possess no other means of living. At each new marriage large presents are made them, which are renewed whenever they visit their wives. Thus a Kulîna, having married into fifty or a hundred families[1], passes from house to house, where he is received with distinction, sumptuously entertained, and loaded, at his departure, with presents, in the hope of tempting him soon to return. In some cases the husband never sees the wife after the nuptials; in others he visits her once, perhaps, in three or four years. A Kulîna of respectable circumstances never lives with the wife, who remains at the house of her parents; he sees her occasionally, as a friend rather than as a husband, and he dreads to have children by her, lest he should thereby sink in honour. In fact, to obviate this evil, they never acknowledge the children born in the houses of their fathers-in-law.

The prevalence of these preposterous customs is the cause of innumerable evils: the married women, neglected by their husbands, and still more their hosts of unmarried sisters, frequently indulge in every kind of debauchery and vice; while their husbands have lately been found, to a most extraordinary extent, among the most daring robbers and banditti[2].

Among the warlike tribes of northern India there anciently prevailed a custom, already alluded to, which bore some resemblance to a feature of Greek manners in the heroic times. The marriage of children was then unknown. The Prince, or Rajah, who had a daughter whom he wished to dispose of in marriage,

[1] Ward had heard of persons having a hundred and twenty wives. View, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 81.

[2] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 78—83.

invited to his court a number of the neighbouring princes; entertained them with a magnificent banquet; and, while they were all seated round the festive board, introduced the princess, who, having made her own choice, approached and threw the *varamâlâ*, or "garland of marriage," round the neck of the favoured suitor[3]. Connected, however, with this chivalrous trait of manners was another custom, too gross to find a counterpart among the Greeks of any age: if the successful lover had any brothers, the lady became the wife of the whole[4].

India, like all other countries which depend directly or indirectly for the success of their harvests on the seasonableness and abundance of the periodical rains, is liable to frequent famines, during which the natives are driven by the goading of imperious hunger to the commission of the greatest enormities. The sacred cow, the living image of Bhavani, is slaughtered and eaten. The strong ties of natural affection are snapped asunder; and, to support a wretched existence, which must thereby, at least in many instances, be for ever embittered, the parent sells his children into slavery, as much, perhaps, in the hope of thus providing for their preservation, though in servitude, as to prolong his own solitary and comfortless life. A traveller, who visited the central provinces in 1792, observes that the country had suffered three years of drought previous to his arrival, in consequence of which the price of wheat-flour had prodigiously augmented. The coarser grains, likewise, were proportionably dear, which placed the means of subsis-

[3] See above, vol. i. p. 277, 278.

[4] The manners of the Massagetæ, described by Herodotus (i. c. 216), are found still to exist among their descendants: "a pair of slippers at the wife's door" is a signal well understood by all Eimauk husbands. Elphinstone's Caubul, vol. ii. p. 251; Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 48, 49; Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 164.

tence so far beyond the reach of the poorer inhabitants, that hundreds were reduced to the humilating necessity of selling their children, to procure a scanty meal for themselves [5].

During the continuance of these famines it is common to behold young men, reduced to despair by hunger, selling themselves at Anjengo, and the other sea-port towns of Malabar, for a morsel of bread; a mother bartering her infant son for a bag of rice; or a desperate father parting with his wife and children for forty or fifty rupees! In the examination of an Indian judge, before the House of Lords, we have a description of the mild kind of servitude to which the individuals thus sold are reduced, as well as a pleasing proof that the parents who, in selling their children on such occasions of distress, appear to have stifled their natural instincts, do not, in many instances, allow their affection for their offspring to be obliterated by time or separation.—"Does slavery exist in the district of Khânpoor? Domestic slavery exists; but of an agricultural slave I do not recollect a single instance. When I speak of domestic slavery, I mean that *status* which I must call slavery for want of any more accurate designation. It does not, however, resemble that which is understood in Europe to be slavery; it is the mildest species of servitude.—Have the goodness to describe the nature of that? The domestic slaves are certain persons purchased in times of scarcity; children purchased from their parents; they grow up in the family, and are almost entirely employed in domestic offices in the house.—Are they liable to be resold? No, certainly not; I never remember an instance of an avowed sale of slaves. I have known attempts made to kidnap children, and send them over to Lucknow; but then that was an illegal act, done clandestinely, as any other clandestine

[5] Asiatic Researches, vol. vi. p. 55, 56.

act would be.—Are those domestic slaves capable of possessing property? I should say not, as far as my own recollection goes. I never remember an instance being brought forward in which it was tried; for they are almost always so contented with remaining in the house of their masters, on whom they always have claims of support, that I cannot remember a single instance of a slave claiming property as independent of his master. I do not think that, by the Mohammedan law, they would be able to hold property.—Did any cases of enfranchisement come within your knowledge? I have known persons, who had sold their children in times of scarcity, come to redeem them; paying back the purchase, and requiring to have them back. I do not think that they have, by the Mohammedan law, a legal claim to have them back; but I always continued to give the children back, when the claim was made to me.—Is slavery recognised by the Hindoo law? It is.—Is there a power of redemption under that law? I am not aware of it; but there is a species of slavery in South Bahar, where a man mortgages his labour for a certain sum of money; and this species of slavery I found afterwards in Arracan and Ava. It is for his life, or until he shall pay the sum, that he is obliged to labour for the person who lends him the money; and if he can repay the sum he emancipates himself[6]."

The practice of selling children, begun, perhaps, in times of scarcity and distress, by no means ceases with the cause in which it originated. Profligate persons, eager to free themselves from the cares which beset the condition of a parent, but incapable of the heinous wickedness of destroying their offspring, resort joyfully to this lesser crime, and, by trafficking in

[6] Min. of Evid. before Com. of Lords, July 8, 1830, p. 106. In Sumatra insolvent debtors become slaves to their creditors. Marsden, Hist. of Sumatra, vol. i. p. 214, 215.

their own progeny, enable themselves to pursue undisturbed their iniquitous career. Children, therefore, may always be purchased at a cheap rate at Anjengo; and a traveller, remarkable for his humane disposition, observes, that he himself bought a boy and a girl, about eight or nine years old, intended as a present for a lady of Bombay, for a smaller sum than he would have paid in England for a couple of pigs. In fact, the two children, with two months' provision of rice and salt for their voyage, and four changes of cotton garments for each, cost him no more than twenty rupees. On another occasion, a young fish-woman brought to his house a basket of mullets in one hand, and a fine boy, about two years old, in the other; both articles for sale. When the bargain for the fish had been concluded, she put up the boy for sale, and pressed the traveller to become a purchaser. On his upbraiding her want of maternal affection, she replied with a smile, that she expected another in a few weeks; and that as she could not manage two, she had made him the first offer of her boy, whom she would part with for a rupee. She again came to his house a few days afterwards with a basket of fish, but had just sold her child to a Portuguese, who, though wealthy and a Christian, had beaten down the price to half a rupee. Thus, says the traveller, did this young woman, without remorse, dispose of an only child for fifteen pence[7]!

[7] Forbes, Orient. Mem. i. 392, 393. Bruce describes the traffic in children as a flourishing branch of commerce in Abyssinia. And Bernier relates an anecdote of an Armenian who drove a hard bargain with him for his own son. Lives of Cel. Tavel. i. 194.—Giraldus Cambrensis says, that the English before the conquest were generally in the habit of selling their children and other relations to be slaves in Ireland, without having even the pretext of distress or famine. Hallam, State of Europe during the Middle Ages, vol. iii. p. 372, note.—Lord Teignmouth, in a note to his Life of Sir William Jones,

The Brahmins, in all things a shrewd artful race, have nowhere shown a more signal example of that cunning, which Lord Bacon dignifies with the name of "wisdom for a man's self," than in creating among their countrymen a deep-rooted belief that their persons were designed by the Deity to be under all circumstances inviolable, and that to deprive them of life, whether by direct violence, or by causing their death in any way, is a crime which admits of no expiation. Upon this almost universal persuasion is founded a very extraordinary practice, once extremely common at Benares, called *sitting in dharna*, which may be translated "caption" or "arrest." When a Brahmin desires to gain some particular point, which he has found it impossible to accomplish by any other means, he proceeds to the door or house of the person against whom his suit is directed, where he sits down in *dharna*, with poison, or a poniard, or some other instrument of suicide in his hand, threatening to use it should his adversary attempt to molest or pass him by. This menace completely arrests him. The plaintiff now commences a fast, in which, according to the rigour of etiquette, in such cases rarely infringed, he must be accompanied by the defendant; and in this situation they both remain until the former obtains satisfaction. As few have recourse to this desperate step without a firm resolution to persevere, the plaintiff rarely fails of effecting his object; for, were the individual thus arrested to permit the Brahmin to perish of hunger at his door, or should he, by any harsh measures, compel him to make use of his poison or his dagger, the sin would for ever lie upon his head.

relates the case of one Horrebon, a foreigner, who, having been convicted in Bengal of purchasing the children of natives, for the purpose of carrying them out of the country and selling them as slaves, was condemned to a long imprisonment, which put a stop to the practice. Vol. ii. p. 176.

Nor is it male Brahmins alone who have recourse to this extraordinary method of obtaining justice. An instance of sitting in *dharna* occurred some years ago at Benares, in which a lady was the principal actor. *Beenoo Bhai*, the lady in question, was a Brahmini widow, who had a litigation with *Balkishen*, her brother-in-law, which, in the first instance, was tried by arbitration. The suit of Beenoo involved a claim of property, and a consideration of caste, the privileges of which her antagonist declared she had forfeited. The decision, though favourable, did not altogether satisfy the lady, who, therefore, determined to carry the remaining points in dispute by *dharna*. Accordingly, she placed herself in the usual position at the door of Balkishen, who, apprehensive of her death, repaired with her to a temple, where they both continued to make trial of their powers of abstinence for some time longer. Thirteen days had now elapsed, when the defendant yielded, subdued rather by hunger than by any sense of justice. He entered into an agreement that, if Beenoo could establish the validity of her claims to caste, by prevailing on some respectable Brahmins to partake with her of an entertainment of her own providing, he would discharge not only the expense of the feast, but also her debts. The conditions were accepted, and fulfilled; but, although Balkishen readily defrayed the expense of the entertainment, he refused to perform the remainder of his engagement, which brought the affair under official notice[8].

A far more striking and important example of "sitting in *dharna*" occurred not many years ago at Benares. Government having imposed a house-tax of considerable amount, the natives, startled by the innovation, were immediately in a ferment. They recognized in their British rulers the same rights, they said, which had been exercised by the Moguls;

[8] Asiatic Researches, iv. 331.

that the land-tax was theirs; that they could impose duties on commodities going to market, or for exportation; but their houses were their own; that in such possessions they had hitherto remained unmolested; that they apprehended, not without reason, that the same power which now laid a heavy and unheard-of tax on their dwellings, might next year do the same on their wives and children. Representations to this effect were made to the government at Calcutta, but in vain. Their complaints were slighted, as unworthy of notice; or else their rulers, having made a false step, were deterred by fantastical notions of consistency from retreating. Upon this the whole population of the city and its neighbourhood determined to sit in *dharna*, until their grievances should be redressed. Some of the leading Brahmins sent written handbills to the wards in Benares nearest the college, and to some of the adjoining villages, briefly setting forth the causes and necessity of the measures which they were about to adopt, calling on all lovers of their country and religion to join in it, and commanding, under many bitter curses, every person who received the summons to forward it to his next neighbour. "Accordingly it flew over the country like the fiery cross in the 'Lady of the Lake;' and three days after it was issued, and before Government were in the least apprized of the plan, above three hundred thousand persons, as it was said, deserted their houses, shut up their shops, suspended the labour of their farms, forebore to light fires, dress victuals, many of them even to eat, and sat down, with folded arms and drooping heads, like so many sheep, on the plain which surrounds Benares.

"The local Government were exceedingly perplexed. There was the chance that very many of those strange beings would really perish, either from their obstinacy, or the diseases which they would contract in

their present situation. There was a probability that famine would ensue from the interruption of agricultural labours at the most critical time of the year. There was a certainty that the revenue would suffer very materially from the total cessation of all traffic. And it might even be apprehended that their despair, and the excitement occasioned by such a display of physical force would lead them to far stronger demonstrations of discontent than that of sitting in *dharna*. On the other hand, the authorities of Benares neither were permitted, nor would it have been expedient, to yield to such a demand, so urged. They conducted themselves with great prudence and good temper. Many of the natives appeared to expect, and the Brahmins perhaps hoped, that they would still farther outrage the feelings of the people, by violently suppressing their assemblage. They did no such thing, but coolly reasoned with some of the ringleaders on the impossibility that Government should yield to remonstrances so enforced. They, however, told them expressly, in answer to their inquiries, that if they chose to sit *dharna* it was their own affair; and that so long as they only injured themselves, and were peaceable in their behaviour to others, Government would not meddle with them. They did not omit, however, to bring a strong body of Europeans from Dinapoor and Ghazipoor to the neighbouring cantonment, without appearing to watch the conduct of the natives, or putting it into their heads that they suspected them of violent intentions. At last the multitude began to grow very hungry, and a thunder shower which fell made them wet, cold, and uncomfortable. Some of the party proposed a change of operations, and that a deputation of ten thousand should be sent to address the Governor-General personally. This was eagerly carried by a majority, heartily tired of their situation; and the next question was, how these men should be maintained during

their journey, when one leading Brahmin proposed a tax on houses. A string was here struck which made the whole instrument jar. 'A tax on houses! if we are to pay a tax on houses after all, we might as well have remained on good terms with our Government, sitting under our vines and fig-trees, and neither hungry nor rheumatic.' A great number caught at the excuse for a rupture, and rose to go home, but the remainder determined that all should go to the Governor, every man at his own charge. The seeds of disunion were already sown; and the majority absented themselves from the muster which was held three days after. From ten to twenty thousand, however, really assembled with such provisions as they could collect, and began their march, still unmolested by the magistrates, whose whole conduct was wise and merciful; they well calculated that provisions would soon fall short, and travelling become wearisome, and merely watched their motions at some distance, with a corps of cavalry. They knew that hunger would make them plunder, and that the hilly and jungly road from Benares to Burdwan afforded few facilities for the subsistence of so great a multitude. Accordingly, in a few days they melted away to so small a number, that the remainder were ashamed to proceed. The supreme Government followed up their success most wisely by a repeal of the obnoxious tax; and thus ended a disturbance, which, if it had been harshly or improperly managed, might have put all India in a flame[9]."

Another practice, of a more extraordinary and sanguinary nature, is that which, among the Hindoos, is called "erecting a *koor*." This horrible rite appears to be altogether peculiar to Hindoostan. It consists in building up a large circular pile of wood, ready for conflagration; upon which is then placed

[9] Bishop Heber, Nar. of a Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 432—436.

sometimes a cow, sometimes an old woman, and the pile being set on fire, the whole is consumed to ashes. The object of this practice, as well as of the former, is to carry some point with the officers of Government, the obloquy and criminality of the proceeding being supposed to fall, not upon the perpetrators of the sacrifice, but upon those whose real or imaginary tyranny compels them to resort to it: but in reality, these and similar atrocities are frequently committed on very trifling provocation. A Brahmin of Benares, the farmer of land paying revenue, and tenant of free tax land, was summoned to appear before a native officer. He refused to obey. In consequence, several individuals were deputed to enforce the summons, and compel his attendance; but, on their approaching his house, he cut off the head of his deceased son's widow, and rolled it out before them. It was afterwards proved in evidence that his first intention was to destroy his own wife, but that the youthful widow, weary perhaps of her existence, had requested him to decapitate her; a request with which he instantly complied.

Another Brahmin was shortly afterwards convicted of the murder of his daughter, under a pretext equally frivolous. His own history of the transaction was as follows: about twelve years before the period of the murder he and another person were joint tenants and cultivators of a piece of ground. Some time afterwards the partner relinquished his share. After many years had elapsed, however, the partner again appeared, and brought forward a claim to a share in the ground; but the matter being referred to arbitration, his claim was disallowed. The Brahmin, therefore, continued in possession of the land, and was one day engaged in ploughing it, when his opponent approached, and interrupted him. This unseasonable and, in fact, illegal interruption was too

much for the temper of the Brahmin. "I became angry," says he, "and enraged at his forbidding me; and bringing out my own little daughter, Apmunya, who was only a year and a half old, to the said field, I killed her with my sword."

But the most fearful example of this ferocious practice still remains to be described. It is an instance of matricide, in which it is difficult to say whether a lamentable superstition, an inordinate passion for lucre, or a blind inveterate spirit of revenge predominated. This crime also was the act of Brahmins. Two men of this caste, named Beechuk and Adher, were proprietors of landed estates not exceeding eight acres in extent. The village in which they resided was the property of many other zemindars. A dispute, originating in a competition for the general superintendence of the village revenues, had long subsisted between the two brothers and a person named Goury. The officer of Government, who had conferred this charge upon the latter, had been intimidated into a withdrawal of it, as well as to the transfer of the management to the two Brahmins, by the menaces of their mother, who threatened to swallow poison. By the same means of intimidation he was deterred from investigating the complaints of Goury, which had been referred to his inquiry by the Government. Thus the affair rested for some time. The immediate cause which instigated the Brahmins to murder their mother, was an act of violence said to have been committed by the emissaries of Goury, engaged for a different purpose. Whether or not they had their employer's authority for what they did does not appear, though from the violent enmity existing between the parties, it may be surmised that they had. Be this as it may, they one night, during the absence of the brothers, entered, under the cover of darkness, the apartment of their women, and car-

ried away forty rupees, probably all the money in the house, for the Brahmins were poor men. Beechuk first returned, after the robbery, to his house, where his mother, his wife, and his sister-in-law related what had happened. The indignity which had been offered him, still more, perhaps, than the loss, though to persons in such circumstances that was by no means trifling, inflamed him to madness—for strangers had entered his harem—and, in his fury, he conceived a design worthy of a demon. He immediately conducted his mother to an adjacent rivulet, where, being joined in the grey of the morning by his brother Adher, they called aloud to the people of the village that, although they would overlook the assault as an act which could not be remedied, the forty rupees must be returned. To this declaration no answer was returned; nor is there indeed any certainty that they were heard by any person. However, Beechuk, without further hesitation, drew his scimitar, and at one stroke severed his mother's head from her body. His motive for this demoniacal action may be incomprehensible in Europe. And it will, if possible, be still more inconceivable by what strange modes of thinking his aged parent could be led to approve of and abet the sacrifice of her own life. The real and professed object, however, of both parent and son in this bloody sacrifice was, that the mother's spirit, excited by the beating of a large drum during forty days, might for ever haunt, torment, and pursue to death Goury and all the other persons concerned in the transaction. Indeed, the last words which the mother uttered were, that she would blast the said Goury and all those connected with him [10].

[10] Lord Teignmouth, Asiat. Res. vol. iv. p. 336, 337. The only punishment inflicted on these murderers appears to have been *loss of caste*. See in Bishop Heber's Narrative an in-

Notwithstanding the influence of the Brahmins in certain great families, more particularly over the women, there is nothing in the whole circle of Hindoo manners more indelicate, or more pregnant with evil to society, than auricular confession. "In general it will be found," observes Lord Teignmouth, "that the female zemindars are under the government of the family Brahmin, who *controls their consciences*; he has his own private interests to attend to, and, without appearing, exerts an influence over the conduct of the public business. The managing agent submits to the control of a concealed authority which he must conciliate; and the interests of the state and zemindar equally bend to it."

The compiler of the 'Institutes of Menu' commands that, "(Should the king be near his end, through some incurable disease,) he must bestow on the priests all his riches accumulated from fines; and having duly committed his kingdom to his son, let him seek death in battle, (or, if there be no war, by abstaining from food.")[12] Not to dwell upon the injunction to commit suicide, what can be more irrational than the command of Menu? Yet has it, in the course of ages, been but too well obeyed. In all Rajpootana there is scarcely a single state in which one-fifth of the soil is not placed at the disposition of the priests. This is more particularly the case in Mewar, where the lands in *sahsun*, or religious grants, amount in value to one-

stance of *koor*, in which an old man of seventy burned his wife of the same age, in order to bring a curse upon a disputed piece of land. Vol. i. p. 353.

[11] Mr. Shore's (Lord Teignmouth) Minute of June, 1789, respecting Permanent Settlement of Lands in Bengal. Fifth Report, p. 200.

[12] Chap. ix. ver. 323. The words which we have put between parentheses are not in the text of Menu, but are an addition of the Sanscrit commentator, embodied in Sir W. Jones's translation. See also Colonel Tod, Annals, &c. vol. i. p. 507.

fifth of the revenue of the state. At the general pacification in 1818, the Rana was urged to restore to the fisc such of these lands, as, by the death or exile of the persons to whose ancestors they had been granted, were left unoccupied; but the penalty of "sixty thousand years' residence in hell," denounced against the resumer of sacred charity, effectually deterred him, and, in consequence, some of the finest land in his country remains unproductive. Other motives, perhaps, may unite with superstition in the breast of Hindoo princes to prevent a resumption of the lands; but upon the sub-vassals or cultivators, whom necessity and common sense have enlightened, the menaces and anathemas of the Brahmin produce little or no effect. In vain does the priest threaten them with a series of impure transmigrations. He may appear with the crown-grant in his hand; if his errand be to wrest from them any of their long-established rights, he may spill his blood on the threshold of their dwelling, or on the field in dispute; they will relinquish their lawful possessions only with their lives. In 1818, the *Pat Rani*, or chief queen, bestowed a grant of fifteen *bigahs*[13] of land, in one of the central districts, on a Brahmin who had officiated at the funeral rites of her son, the heir-apparent. "With grant in hand, he hastened to the Jât proprietor, and desired him to make over to him the patch of land. The latter coolly replied, that he would give him all the prince had a right to, namely, the tax. The Brahmin threatened to spill his own blood if he did not obey the command, and gave himself a gash on a limb; but the Jât was inflexible, and declared that he would not surrender his patrimony even if he slew himself[14]." And, in reality,

[13] A *bigah* is about the third part of an acre. Rep. from the Lords, July 8, 1830, p. 301.

[14] Colonel Tod, Annals, &c. vol. i. p. 510, 511.

those proud priests sometimes do slay themselves in support of what they regard as the dignity of their order. In 1820, an officer of Government in Mewar demanded from some Brahmins the payment of a certain tax; they refused compliance; and, upon being pressed, four of their number stabbed themselves to death. Their bodies were then placed upon biers, and all funeral rites deferred until justice should have been executed upon the priest-killer, for as such the officer of Government was considered. "But for once superstition was disregarded [15]."

Examples of suicide are too common even in Europe to excite our astonishment: but among the Hindoos of a certain cast of mind the propensity to self-destruction absolutely amounts to a passion. Numerous are the anecdotes related in proof of this position. Of these, one of the most curious occurred at Bombay. A Hindoo visionary, who, with many others of his nation, lived in the cocoa-nut woods near the city, had acquired, among those who knew him, the reputation of being an amiable man. He was in the prime of life, and possessed a wife and four children. The natives, perhaps from respect to their European rulers, generally keep Sunday as a holiday. They who are rich retire to their country-houses and gardens, or walk on a sandy beach near the sea, which is also the resort of the common people. One Sunday afternoon, the above-mentioned visionary set out with all his family from his dwelling in the woods towards the beach. On the way, he informed his wife that he had received an invitation from the Deity to go to heaven, and take his family with him; that they were to proceed by water, and depart from Back Bay. What were the arguments by which he prevailed on his wife to enter into his madness is unknown; but they were suc-

[15] Colonel Tod, *ubi supra*.

cessful. Accordingly, the wretched parents proceeded to the beach, carrying each an infant in their arms. The two eldest walked before them. In this manner they entered the water, until the children sunk beyond their depth, and were carried off by the waves. The two infants which they carried in their arms were then thrown into the water, whither their mother voluntarily followed them. As the father was deliberately consummating the sacrifice, he suddenly recollected that the disappearance of a whole family in so unaccountable a manner might involve his neighbours in trouble. He therefore returned to declare what he had done, and explain his motives before he should finally depart, which led to his apprehension and execution. His punishment he endured with the utmost resignation, merely regretting the procrastination of his change in the metempsychosis, and that he had not been permitted to leave the world in his own way [16].

Great numbers of persons, of both sexes, impatient of sojourning upon earth, annually drown themselves in the Ganges. An English gentleman, residing at Allahabad, saw, one morning, as he sat at his window, sixteen women drown themselves. They were all accompanied by Brahmins, who aided them in their design. Each woman had a large empty earthen pan, or jar, suspended by a cord from each shoulder. When the devotee had got over the edge of the boat, the Brahmin held her up, until the weight of the pans, when filled with water, was sufficient for their purpose; he then let go his hold, and the woman sunk, a few bubbles of air only rising to the surface of the water. Another of our countrymen beheld at the same place a similar sacrifice, in which men, however, were the actors. Twelve persons, one day, proceeded in boats to drown themselves at the same

[16] Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 262, 263.

spot, each of whom had a piece of bamboo fastened to his body, at either end of which was suspended a large earthen vessel. So long as these vessels remained empty they served to keep them on the surface of the water; but with a cup, placed now in one hand and then in the other, they kept filling the pans from the river, until, being filled, down they went, dragging the wretched fanatics to the bottom. One of the number failed in his resolution, and made to the shore. The officiating Brahmins, offended at his want of firmness, and desirous of compelling him to fulfil his engagement, plied their oars with all their might, but the man gained ground upon them, reached a police-station, and disappointed the priests [17].

Allahabad, however, is not the only city at which these self-sacrifices are made. The same thing also takes place at Benares. "Many scores, every year, of pilgrims, from all parts of India, come hither expressly to end their days, and secure their salvation. They purchase two large Kejaree pots, between which they tie themselves, and when empty these support their weight in the water; thus equipped, they paddle into the stream, then fill the pots with the water which surrounds them, and thus sink into eternity. Government have sometimes attempted to prevent this practice, but with no other effect than driving the voluntary victims a little further down the river; nor, indeed, when a man has come several hundred miles to die, is it likely that a police-officer can prevent him. Instruction seems the only way in which these poor people can be improved, and that, I trust, they will, by degrees, obtain from us [18]."

Another mode of self-immolation sometimes takes place among the *Gosains*, chiefly, perhaps, in Guzerat

[17] Ward, View, &c. vol. i. Pref. p. xxiv. xxv.

[18] Bishop Heber, Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 389, 390.

and the Dekkan. According to this rite the devotee, generally a man in the prime of life, is buried alive, in honour of some one of their gods. The same motives which urged Empedocles to leap into Mount Etna,—insane vanity and the desire of posthumous reputation,—are, however, the real causes of these sacrifices. The mind, thrown by the pleasing fumes of this passion, as by intoxication with opium, into a momentary fit of ecstatic rapture, renders the body insensible to pain. Unmindful of the transitory nature of his enjoyment, the fanatic revels in the delight which he experiences at beholding all around him gazing with wonder-stricken countenances and uplifted hands at his heroic self-devotion. He triumphs in the depths of his soul over their narrow-mindedness, by which they are deterred from coping, like him, with pain and death; and to this temper of their minds, and the habit, natural to mankind, of commemorating and extolling whatever is beyond their reach, he intrusts his fame. The death of these visionaries is always accompanied by the perform ance of numerous rites and ceremonies by the Brahmins, who appear to take a perverse delight in the excitement occasioned by all scenes of horror.

No sooner is a sacrifice of this kind announced, than a vast multitude prepare to assemble, from motives like those of the Brahmins, to witness the exhibition. When the crowd is collected, some from among the number of those who officiate at the rites, dig a grave sufficiently deep for a man to stand upright in it. The self-devoted victim now approaches, descends into the grave, takes a long last look at the cheerful earth, and the faces of those friends whom he is never more to behold, and the earth is gradually thrown over him, till he disappears. A tomb of solid masonry is then erected over his head, where, at stated periods, solemn rites are performed, and flowery

offerings made to the manes of a being who is supposed to have rendered an acceptable service to the destructive power, or some other inhabitant of the Indian Olympus[19].

In his belief in sorcery and witchcraft, the Hindoo resembles the great majority of mankind. Upon this part of Indian superstition, therefore, it is unnecessary to dwell. Unfortunately, however, the persuasion leads in India, as it has led in Europe, to the commission of atrocious crimes, chiefly against the old, the helpless, the friendless, whose isolation and misery should rather entitle them to commiseration and charity. The accidents which serve to attach suspicion to any of those unhappy beings are various: the sudden death, or illness of persons previously in good health; losses incurred from unaccountable causes; general panics, utterly groundless, or founded on misconception; droughts, or the failure of crops. During the trial of three men, indicted for the murder of five pretended sorceresses, the following curious and extraordinary circumstances appeared in evidence: that the successive demise of three or four young people in a village led to a suspicion of sorcery as the cause of it; and the inhabitants, taking alarm, were on the watch to detect the witches. They were generally discovered dancing naked at midnight by the light of a lamp, with a broom tied round their waists, either near the house of a sick person, or on the outside of the village. The general rules for detecting those who practise witchcraft appear to have been then resorted to. According to these, branches of the *sâl* tree (Shorea robusta) marked with the names of all the females in the village, whether married or unmarried, who have attained the age of twelve years, are, during the morning,

[19] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 393, 394. See also Ward, vol. iii. p. 330—338.

placed in water for the space of four hours and a half; and the withering of any of these branches is regarded as a proof of witchcraft against the person whose name is annexed to it. Another method, equally satisfactory, is to envelope small portions of rice in cloths, marked as above, and to place the whole in a nest of white ants[20]. Should the *termites* devour the rice in any of these mystic bags, the charge of sorcery is thereby established against the woman whose name it bears. On other occasions a third mode of detection is adopted. Lamps are lighted at night; water is placed in cups made of leaves, and mustard-seed oil is poured, drop by drop, into the water, while the name of each woman in the village is pronounced; the appearance of the shadow of any woman on the water, during this ceremony, proves her to be a witch.

Another remarkable practice of the Hindoos, not, however, connected with witchcraft, though certainly arising out of that state of mind which maintains the belief in sorcery, takes place when two villages, dis-

[20] Of these nests Bishop Heber gives a description: "I here (on the banks of the Ganges) saw, for the first time, a number of those high ant-hills, the work of the white ant, of which I had often heard. Many of them were five or six feet high, and probably seven or eight feet in circumference at the base, partially overgrown with grass and ivy, and looking at a distance like the stumps of decayed trees. I think it is Ctesias, among the Greek writers, who gives an account, alluded to by Lucian in his book, of monstrous ants in India as large as foxes. The falsehood probably originated in the stupendous fabrics which they rear here, and which certainly might be supposed to be the work of a much larger animal than their real architect. The pyramids, when the comparative bulk of the insects which reared them is taken into the estimate, are as nothing to the works of the termites. The counterpart of one of those hills, which I passed to-day, would be, if a nation should set to work to build up an artificial Snowdon, and bore it full of holes and galleries." Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 248, 249.

puting respecting their mutual claims to some piece of land, are unable by any other means to decide the question. Holes are dug in the ground, into which a certain number of men, chosen from among the inhabitants of the belligerent villages, put one of their legs, around which the earth is closed. In this strange situation they remain, until some one of the imprisoned party expresses a wish to be released, or complains of being bitten or stung by some reptile or insect. This decides the contest, and the property of the ground is adjudged to belong to that village whose representative goes through the trial with most fortitude, and escapes unhurt.

These and many other customs, sufficiently trivial in themselves, still deserve to be described as illustrations of an extraordinary system of manners. The Hindoo, from the cradle to the grave, continually lives in an atmosphere of superstition, which appears to be the natural element of his mind. With this he wraps round even the exercise of his animal functions, the creations of his ingenuity, and the ordinary labours of the field. The villagers inhabiting the banks of the Ganges entertain certain superstitious notions respecting the sugar-cane. It being usual with the husbandmen to reserve a certain portion of the canes of the preceding year, to serve as plants for the next, it frequently happens that, after the fields are planted, there still remain several superfluous canes. Whenever this happens, the husbandman repairs to the spot on the 11th of June; and having sacrificed to *Nagbele*, the tutelary deity of the cane, immediately kindles a fire, and carefully consumes the whole. This is done from an apprehension that, were the old canes to remain any longer in the ground, they might produce flowers and seeds,—an event which they would consider one of the most grievous misfortunes which could befal them. In fact, they

universally believe that if a husbandman should ever, after the day before mentioned, behold but a single old cane in flower, it would be an infallible token that calamities of the direst hue were about to overtake both himself, his parents, his children, and his property; in short, that in a brief season after this fatal spectacle, death would sweep away the greater number, or indeed the whole of his family. But if the proprietor's servant should see this ominous flower, immediately pull it from the stalk, bury it in the earth, and never reveal the circumstance to his master, the anger of the gods would be averted[21].

The belief in ghosts and apparitions has prevailed in all ages and countries; but in India, the world of spirits is as present to the imaginations of men, as the world of matter by which they are surrounded. In the Dekkan the spirits of bad men are called *Virikas*, and are believed to enjoy permission to walk the earth, to take refuge in forests, caverns, and ruins, from whence they come forth occasionally to taste the only delight which their perverse natures can be supposed to know, in filling the minds of the living with terror and anguish. For this calamity, from which no man can account himself safe, the gods, however, have kindly provided a remedy. Wherever the empire of the *Virikas* extends, there exists a class of men called *Cani*, or *Shaycana*, who possess the power of putting these malevolent spirits to flight. Some of these sorcerers, or diviners, who derive their knowledge from the stars, are regarded as men of learning, though not inspired by the deity. Others, who rattle an iron instrument, and chaunt incantations to the gods until their voice almost fails, become as if intoxicated or mad, and are believed to be inspired. Concerning the causes and events of the diseases of man and beast, both these classes

[21] Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. p. 341, seq.

of hierophants are consulted. They are of course careful to assign as causes the wrath of the gods, while they at the same time declare whether or not the god may be pacified, and allow the object of his wrath to recover. The power of bringing to pass this much wished-for event belongs to themselves. They are, moreover, able to discover the character of the *Virika;* whether it be the spirit of a stranger, or one of the family; and what rites are to be performed in order to put him to flight. If the malevolent spirit be that of a stranger, he is by no means troublesome: the diviner will dismiss him for a *fanam* and a half[22]; but if the devil belong to the family, he conceives himself to possess the right of tormenting his own relations, and is consequently expelled with much difficulty, requiring an expensive sacrifice and many prayers[23].

Elsewhere, in southern India, these spirits are called *Paisâchi;* and on the subject of their nocturnal visits Dr. Buchanan tells an amusing ghost story. "The arrival of a set of fresh men, and the consequent preparatious for our departure, caused great joy among my people, notwithstanding their weak state (they had nearly all been ill). When the cook was taken ill I had given orders to secure his effects, for the benefit of his wife and children; but, on inspection after his death, no money could be found. Whether he had been plundered as soon as he became insensible, and that a guilty conscience occasioned fears among his companions, or whether the sudden manner of his death occasioned suspicions, I cannot say; but it was immediately believed that he would become a *Paisâchi*, and all my people

[22] Nine-pence sterling.

[23] Buchanan, Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. ii. p. 152. The Brahmins who study the Atharvana-Veda, are supposed to be all magicians by the Hindoos. Dubois, p. 47, 48.

were filled with terror. The butler imagined that the *Paisâchi* appeared to him at night with a black silk handkerchief tied round its head, and gave him instructions to take all the effects of the deceased to his family; upon this, the butler, being a man of courage, put his shoes at the right side of the door, which he considered to be a sure preventative against such intruders. Next night a cattle driver, lying in all the agonies of nocturnal terror, saw the appearance of a dog enter, and smell round the place where the man had died; when, to his utter dismay, the spectre gradually grew larger and larger, and at length, having assumed the form of the cook, vanished with a shriek. The poor man had not the courage to use the slippers, but lay till morning in a kind of stupor. After this even the minds of the *sepoys* were appalled; and when I happened to be awake, I heard the sentries, by way of keeping up their courage, singing with a tremulous voice[24]."

The belief in the efficacy of amulets and talismans is almost universal in the East, where accurate rules have been laid down for their construction. The gem, the crystal, the metal, or other substance, is ordered to be dug or searched for, when some particular angel rules the day. It must be prepared or engraved under the influence of another; and the *zemzemah*, or prayer of a third, must be pronounced over it, in order to confer upon it that mysterious virtue which constitutes its value. In gathering the herbs and flowers; in cropping the hairs of camels, sea-cows, or other animals of which the amulets are formed, different ceremonies are necessary; and the suspending of them, when completed, round the necks of men, women, and children, or animals, is usually performed with great precision and solemnity. A talisman, constructed with the requisite rites, and

[24] Buchanan, Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. iii. p. 358.

under the proper planetary influences, was of old buried in the earth with hidden treasure, which it was supposed to put in perfect safety, by rendering it invisible to every eye but that of its owner. The practice of burying treasure in the East, originated in the political circumstances of those countries, where, owing to the badness of the government, the tenure of property was commonly found to be insecure. For this reason it has long been customary for a rich man to divide his estate into three portions: one he employs in trade, or in purchasing the necessaries of life; another he invests in jewels, which he may easily carry off, if forced to fly; the third he buries. No person being intrusted with the secret of this deposit, which is guarded by some talisman, or ring of power, the treasure, should the owner die before he returns to the spot, is lost to the world, till fortune or accident throws it in the way perhaps of some fortunate peasant, when turning up his ground. Those discoveries of hidden treasure, and sudden transitions from poverty to riches, of which we read in oriental tales, are therefore by no means quite ideal, says Richardson, but a natural consequence of the manners of the people.

The talismanic gems appear to have been sometimes engraved, though generally, perhaps, they were set plain in gold. A traveller, who possessed one of these gems set in a ring, observes that it was a convex oval emerald, rough as when taken from the mine. It had previously belonged to a friend, who, having passed the greater part of his life in the East, in constant intercourse with the Hindoos, had been infected by their superstitions, and contracted a belief in lucky and unlucky days, omens, spells, and talismans. Nevertheless this gentleman had contrived, with all this weight of superstition about him, to rise high in the Company's service; to become, in fact, an

ambassador, whose conduct was not without influence on the destinies of nations. In this capacity he was suddenly directed to proceed, about sixty years ago, to the Mahratta capital. He departed from Bombay with a numerous retinue, and rapidly directed his course towards the Ghauts, through a country in which there were no choultries or caravansaries. He therefore pitched his tents wherever he found the convenience of shade and water. On the second evening of the journey, while encamped under a friendly banian tree, on the margin of a lake, the ambassador, on retiring to his sleeping-tent, missed his ring. He felt disturbed. Instead of retiring to rest, therefore, he immediately ordered the strictest search to be made for it, but without success. The talisman was gone, and its owner, like a man suddenly deprived of his armour in a field of battle, considered himself exposed and open on all sides to the shafts of misfortune. Notwithstanding that he had left Bombay in the rainy season, in order to reach the Mahratta capital on a day which the Hindoo astrologers, in whom he placed the most implicit confidence, had marked as peculiarly auspicious, and although the business of the embassy required the most urgent despatch, he remained the following day at the encampment, in search of this precious gem, and even offered a large reward for its discovery, but in vain. With irritated feelings, therefore, and a mind overcast with apprehensions of evil, he proceeded on his journey. The business of the embassy detained him about thirteen months; and the rainy season had again set in when he returned with his suite towards Bombay.

"The advantage of shade and water induced them to occupy the ground of their former little encampments, and the tents were again pitched upon the

same spot where the ambassador had lost his ring. It had rained hard in the day, but the evening was remarkably fine, and the moon at the full. While sitting at his tent door, after supper, reviewing his late negotiations at Poonah, and by an association of ideas, reverting to the loss of his ring in that very place, he perceived the dark side of the grove illuminated by thousands of fire-flies, flitting among the branches, with a brilliancy of which the faint light of the European glow-worm gives but little idea. Those who have travelled in Italy during the summer months, and have there seen the lampyris, or *lucciola*, although not so numerous as in the Asiatic woods, can easily conceive the nocturnal splendour of these insects in the torrid zone. I have seen them produce a fine effect in the dark recesses of the majestic Coliseum, and illumine the gardens of the Villa Medici at Rome. On the banks of the Arno they add much to the beauty of a Tuscan evening; and the English poets are fond of celebrating the 'emerald light' of the *lucciola* and the glow-worm. While the ambassador was amusing himself with the splendid appearance of these insects in the surrounding shades, he observed one of them settled among the grass, which was always stationary and motionless, although shining with equal lustre. Having remarked it for a considerable time, curiosity led him to approach it: the moon shone on the spot; he stooped to seize the insect, and took up his ring." Here it had remained for thirteen months, undiscovered by any other traveller, and during the fair season was probably buried in dust. This the rains had now washed away; and the moonbeam, reflected brilliantly from the convex face of the emerald, giving it the appearance of a living gem, had attracted the fortunate eye of the owner. This circumstance, by appearing in some sort to connect his destiny with

that of the ring, gave it thenceforward an inestimable value in his eyes[25]."

The importance of the periodical rains to India has already been frequently alluded to. During their continuance it is that the great tanks and reservoirs, whether for irrigation or the common use of the inhabitants, are filled for the remainder of the year, in all those places which have not the advantage of springs or perennial streams. Even in Guzerat, which is much better supplied with water than most other provinces of India, the setting in of the rains is a season of great rejoicing. These festivities, by the natural genius of the people, assume the form of a religious festival, accompanied with rites and sacrifices. From a description of one of these useful works found at Dhuboy, a city of Guzerat, and of the ceremonies accompanying its filling, a just idea may be formed of the general style of such structures, with the joy exhibited by the natives at seeing the blessings which they dispense secured to them. The great tank of Dhuboy, three quarters of a mile in circumference, is lined throughout with hewn

[25] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 95—98; vol. iii. p. 390. Richardson's Dissertation on the Languages, Literature, and Manners of the Eastern Nations, p. 172, 272—276. Asiatic Researches, vol. v. p. 403. See also the very curious and learned notes to the History of the Caliph Vathek, p. 228—258; and Col. Tod's Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 581. Marsden, in his excellent History of Sumatra, observes, that in that island charms are worn about the necks of children, as in Europe; but he could never learn of what they are composed. "A charm against an ague I once," says he, "accidentally met with, which, from circumstances, I conclude to be a translation of such as are employed by the Portuguese Christians in India. From the many folds that appear in the original, I have reason to apprehend that it had been worn, and by some Englishman, whom frequent sickness and the fond love of life had rendered weak and superstitious enough to try the effects of this barbarous, and ridiculous quackery." Vol. i. p. 153, 154, note.

stone, and a flight of steps which reaches to the water's edge. "This magnificent reservoir is supplied with water, not only by the periodical rains, but also from receptacles without the walls, by means of a stone aqueduct communicating with the tank, which it enters under a small temple in the hallowed groves of the Brahmins, forming a cascade with a picturesque effect."

On the opening of this aqueduct, at the commencement of the rainy season, a gay festival takes place, similar to that which is celebrated in Egypt during the annual inundation of the Nile. Religious processions to the temples of the gods first take place, with flowery sacrifices which are performed in the surrounding groves. The aged and sedate stand by, and look on with complacency, while the younger females dance on the banks, and the boys rush into the foaming cataract, and swim about the lake. The dances which take place on these occasions being the spontaneous offspring of joy, are more lively and natural than those of the dancing girls; and the songs which accompany them, like the rhapsodies of the Italian improvisators, or those of their own bhauts or minstrels, are all extemporaneous effusions. The air and figure, both wholly unstudied, have been thought to resemble those of the modern Greeks, whose manner of dancing, says Lady Mary Wortley Montague, is certainly the same that Diana is said to have danced on the banks of the Eurotas. The great lady still leads the dance, and is followed by a troop of young girls, who imitate her steps, and if she sings, make up the chorus. The tunes are extremely gay and lively, yet with something in them wonderfully soft. The steps are varied, according to the pleasure of her who leads the dance; but always in exact time, and infinitely more agreeable than any of our dances.

Another festival, celebrated in a very different

style in Bengal, offers a curious scene to the eye of the traveller. This is the *deperah*, which is celebrated annually, not only on shore, but also on the Ganges, and all those tributary streams which more or less partake of its sanctity. "At five o'clock in the afternoon the boats begin to be in motion. They are of a singular construction, particularly those called *moor punkees*, or 'peacock-boats,' which are made as much as possible to resemble the peacock; others are decorated with the head and neck of a horse, and different devices; one sort in particular, which proceeds with the greatest velocity with oars, is extremely long and narrow, and on that account called a *snake*. In the most commodious part of these boats are laid carpets, cushions, and pillows, covered with silk, satin, or *kimbcobs*[26], fringed and embroidered with gold and silver; especially those which contain the images and religious ornaments. These are placed before the apartment where the wealthy Hindoos are seated; while on a platform near the deities a man dances, sings, and beats time to the oars of the rowers, ornamented with bells. A number of these boats, all in swift motion, the company in their best attire, the images gaudily decked and enwreathed with flowers, the songs and dances of the choristers uniting with the stroke of the oars or paddles, give a lively interest to the scene. Some of these boats are rowed by forty paddles, each with its bells[27]."

The sacrifice of the bull and the horse, as well as of human victims, has prevailed even up to our own times in India. In the sacrifice of the bull, twenty posts are fixed in the earth, with a bull tied to each. The animals are then slaughtered, and portions of their flesh burned on the altars. Much

[26] A rich species of brocade.

[27] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 295; Mr. Cruso's Journal vol. iv. p. 97, 98; Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 586.

greater ceremony accompanies the *aswamêdha*, or sacrifice of the horse. The animal must be of one colour, if possible white, of good signs, young and well formed. The sacrificer must touch, on an auspicious day, the head of the horse with clay from the Ganges, with sandal-wood, a pebble, rice not cleansed from the husk, leaves of *durva* grass, flowers, fruits, curds, a shell, a lamp, a mirror, silver and gold, repeating the necessary formula. Having first been bathed with water, in which had been immersed a ball composed of the bark of different trees and various kinds of spices, the horse is next superbly caparisoned. Then the god Indra is invoked by a number of prayers to come and preserve the horse, which is about to be set at liberty. After this a small piece of paper is fastened on the forehead of the horse, inscribed with the following words: "I liberate this horse, having devoted it to be sacrificed. Whoever has strength to detain it, let him detain it. I will come and deliver it. They who are unable to detain it, will let it go, and must come to the sacrifice, bringing tribute[28]." These ceremonies being concluded the horse is let loose, and runs at liberty for a whole year, during which whole time, however, he is constantly followed by servants belonging to the sacrificer. The year being expired, he is caught and bound. A proper place for the sacrifice having been selected, and walled round with bricks, a roof is raised on pillars, under which is erected an altar of earth. At the eastern extremity of the altar a small terrace of sand is raised for receiving the fire; and from the roof is suspended a canopy, with elegant curtains on all sides. On the pillars of the altar are suspended branches of the mango-tree, bells, garlands of flowers, with *châmaras*, or tails of the cow of Tartary. The

[28] The Purânas give accounts of dreadful wars, both among gods and men, to obtain this horse. Ward, vol. iii. p. 274.

sacrificer, accompanied by a number of persons engaged to officiate at the rites, then enters, while portions of the Sâma-Veda are recited. Twenty-one posts, to one of which the horse is fastened, are then fixed in the earth, adorned with garlands, and having thirty inferior victims tied to them. These are purified by aspersions of holy water, and numerous incantations. A silver image of Garuda, with sixteen golden bricks, is then borne in, and the sacrificer and his wife wash the feet of the horse, and caparison him anew. The fire is blown with a fan of deer's skin. The holy water is contained in a fig-tree bowl. There is likewise provided an earthen vessel of water, with the image of a man painted on it, which is covered with branches, fruit, and flowers, and ornamented with gold, silver, pearls, and other gems. The horse is then slain, and his flesh, cut into small pieces, is cast into the fire, while the sacrificer and his wife sit upon the altar and receive the fumes. After this the other victims are slain, amidst the chaunting of repeated incantations. The gods to whom these sacrifices are offered are Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, and the ten guardian deities of the earth[29].

In that section of the *Kâlikâ Purâna*, which has with great propriety been termed the "sanguinary chapter," minute directions are given for the performance of a human sacrifice, by which the goddess Kâli is said to be rendered propitious for a thousand years. This sacrifice was at first permitted only to Sudras; but in process of time the other castes appear to have encroached upon their privilege. "Now at-

[29] Ward, View, &c. vol. iii. p. 273—276. Compare the minute description of the sacrifice of a horse, performed by king Dasarat'ha, in the Râmâyana, book i. ch. 12, &c. The sacrifice alluded to in Southey's Curse of Kehama, canto viii., is one of the kind here described. An ass is sometimes sacrificed by religious mendicants, as an atonement for some fault by which they had forfeited their rank as devotees.

tend," says Siva, "to the particulars relative to the offering of human blood. Let a victim be sacrificed at a place of holy worship, or at a cemetery where dead bodies are buried. Let the oblation be performed in the part of the cemetery called Heruca, or at a temple of Kâmâkhyâ, or on a mountain. Now attend to the mode. The cemetery represents me (Siva), and is called Bhairava; it has also a part called Tantranya: the cemetery must be divided into these two divisions, and a third called Heruca. The human victim is to be immolated in the east division, which is sacred to Bhairava; the head is to be presented in the south division, which is looked upon as the place of skulls, sacred to Bhairavi; and the blood is to be presented in the west division, which is denominated Heruca. Having immolated a human victim, with all the requisite ceremonies, at a cemetery or holy place, let the sacrificer be cautious not to cast eyes upon the victim. The victim must be a person of good appearance, and be prepared by ablutions, and requisite ceremonies, such as eating consecrated food the day before, and must be adorned with chaplets of flowers, and besmeared with sandal-wood. Then causing the victim to face the north, let the sacrificer worship the several deities, presiding over the different parts of the victim's body; let the worship be then paid to the victim himself by his name[80]."

The rites having been thus far completed, the victim worshipped, and all the gods in him, he is no longer regarded as an inhabitant of this perishable world. "When this has been done, O my children!" exclaims Siva, "the victim *is even as myself*, and the guardian deities of the ten quarters take place in him: then Brahma, and all the other deities assemble in the victim; and be he ever so great a sinner, he

[80] Asiatic Researches, vol. v. p. 371, &c.; Ward, View, &c. vol. iii. p. 148.

becomes pure from sin, and, when pure, his blood changes to ambrosia, and he gains the love of Mahâdêvi, who is the goddess of the whole universe,—the very universe itself." In the description of persons forbidden to be offered up on the altars of the goddess are enumerated the aged, the sick, the blind, the maimed, the desperately wicked, and all women whatever. In fact, it is expressly declared that the sacrificer of a female will indubitably sink into hell. Neither is a Brahmin or a Chandala to be sacrificed, or a prince, the offspring of a prince, of a Brahmin, or of a Kshatriya, or any one who has conquered in battle. It is also ordained, that the person to be sacrificed should not fall short of twenty-five years of age.

It is clear, therefore, that the victims to be selected for these occasions were intended to be Vaisyas, or Sudras, whose lives were considered of comparatively little value. Yet it was expected that the victim should come forward voluntarily; for it is expressly ordained that the *timid* are not to be sacrificed, by which is implied a compliment to the heroism of those who willingly encounter death. The design of this horrid rite is to discover the future fate of the sacrificer; and therefore it is to be presumed that the omens to be drawn from the circumstances attending it are sedulously studied and treasured up. The principal of these are gathered from the way in which the head falls when severed from the trunk. Should it fall towards the north-east, or south-west, the prince of the country and the offerer of the sacrifice will both perish. But if, when severed from the body, the head fall towards any of the following quarters, the following omens are to be drawn: if towards the east, wealth; if towards the south-west, power; if towards the south, terror; if towards the west, profit; if towards the north-west, a son; if towards the north, riches.

When a prince desires to sacrifice his enemy, but is unable to obtain possession of his person, he is directed to cut him off by proxy; that is, to substitute a buffalo or a goat for the enemy, calling it throughout the whole ceremony by the name of the person whom he wishes to murder, having first invoked the axe with holy texts. The victim being bound, he is to strike off the head, and present it with all due care to Dêvi. "Let him make these sacrifices in proportion to the increase or decrease of his enemies, lopping off the heads of victims for the purpose of bringing destruction on his foes, infusing, by holy texts, the soul of the enemy into the body of the victim, which will, when immolated, deprive the foe of life also."

Sometimes the devotee, too poor, perhaps, to provide inferior victims, too weak to command the life of another man, too much attached to life to become himself a victim, imagines another method of appeasing the goddess with blood. This is effected by making incisions in his own body, and drawing from thence blood for the sacrifice. The blood to be thus offered is not drawn from any part of the body below the navel, from the back, lips, or chin, or from any limb, except the arm. The incision should be made in the bosom, in the cheeks, in the forehead, between the eyebrows, in the tips of the ears, or in the sides. The blood should be caught in the petal of a lotos, and presented; but is not to exceed in quantity the fourth part of what a lotos-petal will contain.

The sacrifice of human victims is still supposed to take place occasionally in Bengal, where the headless trunks of the victims have been sometimes found near the images of Kâli, weltering in blood. The perpetrators of the crime, which must now be done in secret, are seldom or never discovered. The following story, credited among the Hindoos, is related

respecting Rajah Krishna Chandra. A Brahmachâri, renowned for his piety, had a dream, in which he supposed himself directed to offer a certain number of human sacrifices, after which Kâli would appear to him, and grant all his desires. As he could not furnish the necessary victims, he laid open his case to Krishna Chandra, promising that, if he would supply the victims, he should also share in the promised prosperity. The Rajah consented, and erecting a house in the midst of a large plain, there shut up the Brahmachâri, while he at the same time issued secret orders to some of his chosen servants to seize persons of the proper description, and forward them to the Brahmin. The sacrifices were continued for two or three years; a thousand victims bled upon the altars; but at length the solitary perpetration of so many horrors began to prey upon the Brahmin's mind, and he became weak and emaciated. The Rajah now began to suspect that there might have been some mistake; and, upon consulting several learned men at his court, found that the Brahmachâri had probably misinterpreted the import of the words which he had heard in his dream, and which, in fact, might signify simple oblations of food. The sacrifices were discontinued; but the blood of a thousand victims was already upon the head of the Rajah and the Brahmin[31].

[31] Asiatic Researches, v. 372; vii. 122; viii. 437. Ward, vol. iii. p. 107, 130, 268, 272. Heber, Narrative, &c. vol. iii. p. 263. The horrors of these sacrifices are sometimes augmented by cannibalism. "There are classes (of Hindoos), as the *Aghori*, that worship Iswara (Siva) in his most degraded form, who will not only devour raw flesh, but that of man; and to whom it is a matter of perfect indifference whether the victim was slaughtered or died a natural death. For the honour of humanity, such monsters are few in number; but that they practise these deeds I can testify, from a personal visit to their haunts, where I saw the cave of one of these troglodyte monsters, in which, by his own command, he was inhumed." Colonel

In the romantic annals of the Rajpoots are recorded numerous instances of the tremendous influence of superstition on the Hindoo character. Of these many will perhaps be noticed when we come to treat of the wars of India; but there is one practice, which wants not, however, its parallels in the history of other nations, that vindicates its claim to be classed among the remarkable customs of the Hindoos. This is denominated *Johur*, or the "immolation of the harem." The most fearful of these sacrifices, perhaps, recorded in history, occurred at the sack of Cheetore. It was accompanied by other terrible circumstances. The city, robbed of its bravest defenders by a former unsuccessful beleaguerment, was closely invested by the overwhelming forces of a Mohammedan king. The Rana, filled with anxiety and apprehension, had retired to his couch. He had twelve sons; all brave, and burning to signalize the love which they bore their fatherland by a voluntary death before the walls of their native city. Their gallantry was not displeasing to their father; but he wished to preserve at least one of the number, to whom he might bequeath his broken sceptre, with all the accumulated glory of his race. While pondering on this melancholy theme, a voice broke upon his solitude, exclaiming, "I am hungry!" and, lifting up his eyes, he beheld, by the dim glare of the lamp, the shadowy form of the genius of Cheetore advancing towards him, between the granite columns. The Rana knew the phantom; and he exclaimed, "What! not satiated, though eight thousand of my kin were late an offering to thee?" "I must have regal victims," replied the spectre,

Tod, Annals, &c. vol. i. p. 575, 576. The ὠμοφαγία, or eating raw flesh, is supposed to have formed a part of the mysteries of Osiris, and was transferred to the orgies of Bacchus. Prichard, Researches into the Physical History of Man, p. 369.

"and if twelve who wear the diadem bleed not for Cheetore, the land will pass from the line." So saying, it vanished. On the morrow, when the Rana revealed the vision to his council, they regarded it as a mere dream; but he again assembled them at midnight, when the phantom a second time appeared, and, in the hearing of all, repeated the menaces of the preceding night. "Though thousands of barbarians strew the earth, what are they to me? On each day enthrone a prince. Let the *kirnia*, the *chhattra*, and the *châmara*[31] proclaim his sovereignty, and for three days let his decrees be supreme: on the fourth let him meet the foe and his fate. Then only may I remain."

Among the twelve brothers there now arose a generous contention for the honour of becoming the first victim. The eldest urged the right of primogeniture. He was proclaimed; the umbrella was waved over his head; and on the fourth day he perished among the ranks of the enemy. Ajeysi, the next in birth, now claimed the fatal honour; but he was the favourite son, and, at his father's request, consented that his brothers should tread the road to death before him. When now the eleven had fallen, and this beloved son alone remained, all the force of parental love was awakened in the soul of the Rana, and calling his chiefs around him, he said, "Now I devote myself for Cheetore." But, according to ancient custom, his death was to be preceded by the awful rite of *johur*, designed to place their wives and daughters beyond the reach of pollution or captivity. The vast funeral pile was therefore lighted within the great subterranean retreat, which seems to have stretched

[31] These are the insignia of royalty. The *kirnia* is a parasol; from *kirana*, a ray; the *chhattra* is the umbrella, always red; the *châmara*, the flowing tail of the wild ox set in a gold handle, and used to drive away the flies. Colonel Tod.

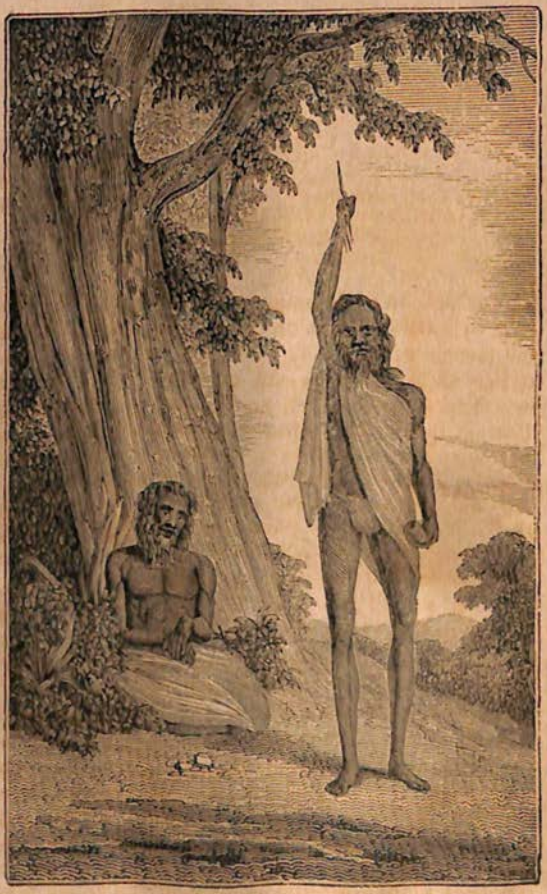
far beneath the city, in chambers impervious to the light of day; and the defenders of Cheetore beheld their queens, with their own wives and daughters, to the number of several thousands, walk in sad procession to the burning vaults. Whatever the city contained of youth or beauty was included among the victims. The whole pageant entered the caverns; the openings were closed; and all perished in smoke and flames. A contest now arose between the Rana and his son; but paternal authority at length prevailed, and Ajeysi consented to live for Cheetore. He, therefore, with a small devoted band, cut his way through the enemy's lines. The father, surrounded by his faithful followers, then rushed forth from the city, and gallantly perished in the camp of his foe. Over the cavern where the *johur* took place a huge serpent is supposed to keep watch; and from that day to the present it has never been entered. On another occasion, when the city was about to be stormed by Bahadur, Sultan of Guzerat, combustibles were heaped up in reservoirs and magazines excavated in the rock, under which gunpowder was strewed. The queen-mother led the procession of willing victims, and thirteen thousand women met their death in the flames. Upon entering the city, the Sultan beheld the mangled bodies of the slain, with hundreds in the last agonies, from the poniard or poison, awaiting death as less dreadful than dishonour and captivity. During the siege and in the storm thirty-two thousand Rajpoots had fallen. "The last day of Cheetore had arrived[32]."

[32] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 265, 312; Heber, Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 479, 480; Dow, History of Hindostan, vol. ii. p. 254, 255.

Chapter X.

SANNYASIS—YOGIS—GOSAINS—GURUS—BHATS—CHARANS—SERPENT-CHARMERS—JUGGLERS—DANCING-GIRLS, &c.

There are, in most countries, persons who imagine that by inflicting pain on themselves they can gain the favours of the Deity, and that self-imposed sufferings and privations will meet with their reward in a future state. Such are the individuals who in Europe people the monasteries of La Trappe. In Mohammedan countries they become Santons and Fakirs; and in India, where this kind of madness appears to prevail most generally, they transform themselves into Yogis, Sannyâsis, Gosains—fanatics, subsisting upon the labours of the industrious. It was anciently regarded as the duty of a Brahmin, who had passed with credit through the condition of a student and of the master of a family, to retire at a certain period of life into the desert, and become what by the Hindoos is called a *Vanaprast'ha*, or "hermit." Their professed object in thus fleeing from the world was, by forsaking cities and all intercourse with ordinary men, to purify their minds in solitude, and attain the highest degree of perfection of which human nature is capable. To motives of such a kind, when acted upon sincerely, no objection can be made; but perhaps ambition, or the lust of fame, exerted a greater influence in this determination than the pious her-



Yogis.

mits themselves supposed; for they well knew that the vulgar still follow with their eyes and admiration whatever surpasses their own power or their courage. The novices were very kindly received by the elder hermits, who perhaps rejoiced at beholding their society enlarged, and gladly initiated them in the rules of what they termed a solitary life.

It was probably in the brain of these ambitious ascetics, intent upon subduing and commanding that world from which they pretended to fly, that the Brahminical system was first hatched. They appear, in fact, to have been the original Brahmins, who, under the name of *Brachmanes* and *Gymnosophistæ*, were well known to the ancient world. Some among their number undoubtedly applied themselves to the study of science and philosophy, in which their proficiency was by no means contemptible. It was to them that Alexander, after invading their country, applied for the gratification of his curiosity, though the pupil of Aristotle could reap but little benefit from the communications of sages of so retired a character. It would appear, however, that in his time they were regarded as the only genuine Brahmins.

The most ancient, and by far the most celebrated of the class, were the Seven Great *Rishis* or Sages, who, with their wives, were afterwards raised to heaven, and placed among the constellations[1]. Their successors were held in little less veneration. The greatest monarchs paid them a degree of reverence

[1] The names of the seven Rishis, shining in the *Wain*, are *Pulaha*, or the star α; *Kratu*, ζ; *Atri*, γ; *Pulastya*, δ; *Angiras*, ϵ; *Vasisht'ha*, ζ; and, close to it, is a small star, representing *Arundhati*, his wife; the seventh is *Marichi*, or η. The wives of the seven *Rishis* are the *Pleiades*, at least six of them; for the Hindoos do not know that they were seven formerly. As. Res. ix. 84, 85. See Menu, iii. 194.

bordering on adoration. Through their benedictions alone did they look for success; and their curses were regarded as dreadful beyond all things. In the *Padma Purâna* we find an exact description of the style in which these sages were accustomed, in old times, to be received by a great monarch. "Penetrated with joy and respect beyond expression, he prostrated himself at full length before them. When he rose, he made them sit down, and washed their feet. He then poured the water that had been so used upon his own head. This was succeeded by a sacrifice of flowers, which he offered to their feet. Then, with both hands clasped, and raised over his head, he made them a profound obeisance and addressed them in these words: 'The happiness which I enjoy this day in seeing your holy feet, is a sufficient reward for all the good works I have yet performed. I possess all happiness in beholding those blessed feet, which are the true flowers of *nilufar* [2]. Now is my body become wholly pure. Ye are the gods whom I serve, and besides you I acknowledge no others on the earth. Nothing is purer than I shall henceforth be.'"

But it is matter of little surprise that earthly princes, whom philosophers, whether in the east or in the west, are accustomed to regard with but little deference, should thus humble themselves before these sages, considering the footing on which they stood with the gods, who were supposed to respect them, and to feel honoured by their visits. There was, according to some authorities, no sort of reverence or distinction which the deities did not manifest for them; though they received in return but rough and haughty treatment. "Witness him, who paid a visit to each of the

[2] The blue water-lily.

three principal divinities of India, and began his interview by giving each of them a kick! His object was, to know how they would demean themselves, and to find out their temper, by the conduct which they would adopt upon such a salutation[3]."

The fourth, and most perfect degree to which a Brahmin can attain, is that of *Sannyâsi;* a state which the Hindoo scriptures describe as so sublime that it imparts, in a single generation, a greater degree of merit than ten thousand generations spent in the vain works of this world could produce. Instead of being condemned, like ordinary mortals, to return after death to animate another body, or to move round in the circle of eternal generation and decay, the Sannyâsi passes straightway to the heaven of Brahma or Vishnu, where he is absorbed and lost in the great fountain of all existence.

The Sannyâsi takes precedence of the Vanaprast'ha, because the latter, who, though in a desert, does not renounce the society of his wife and children, has not absolutely forsaken the world; whereas the true Sannyâsi must absolutely break off all ties, whether of affection or interest, which could bind him to society, make profession of mendicity, and from the moment of his installation into that lofty office, subsist solely upon alms. He is rigidly forbidden to fly to the sanctuary of this holy order from a mere temporary fit of zest, ill humour, or distaste for the world. His determination is to be the fruit of pure piety, desirous, by hedging itself round with solitude, to prevent the inroad of idle thoughts. In the tranquil waste, where Nature, though stern of aspect, seems to manifest herself more completely than in the populous

[3] Dubois, Description of the Manners, &c. of the Hindoos, p. 302, 304.

town or cultivated region, he hopes to hush and compose his passions, while his virtues are ripened and brought to perfection by the concentrated rays of meditation. The vanities of life must no longer have any charm for him, even in idea. He must so thoroughly detach himself from whatsoever pertains to fortune, pleasures, honours, as no longer to experience a hankering after such possessions. In fact, should he voluntarily nourish in his heart the slightest desire for those things which other men covet most vehemently, the fruits of his previous penance, and all the power of holiness would depart from him[4].

Menu describes as follows the manner in which the Sannyâsi is to renounce the world: "When the father of a family perceives his muscles become flaccid, and his hair grey, and sees the child of his child, let him then seek refuge in a forest. Abandoning all food eaten in towns, and all his household utensils, let him repair to the lonely wood, committing the care of his wife to her sons, or, accompanied by her, if she chooses to attend him. Let him take up his consecrated fire, and all his domestic implements of making oblations to it, and, departing from the town to the forest, let him dwell in it with complete power over his organs of sense and of action. With many sorts of pure food, such as holy sages used to eat, with green herbs, roots, and fruit, let him perform the five great sacraments, introducing them with due ceremonies. Let him wear a black antelope's hide, or a

[4] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 350. This doctrine is developed at great length in the *Bhagavad-Gitâ*, a philosophic poem, forming an episode of the Mahâbhârata. (Translated into English by Wilkins, London, 1787; and into Latin by Schlegel, Bonn, 1823.) The term *Sannyâsi* signifies "one who has abandoned all worldly concerns." The Sannyâsis possess an absolute authority in all religious matters. Buchanan, Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. i. p. 238.

vesture of bark [5]; let him bathe evening and morning; let him suffer the hair of his head, his beard, and his nails to grow continually. From such food as he may eat, let him, to the utmost of his power, make offerings and give alms; and with presents of water, roots, and fruit, let him honour those who visit his hermitage. Let him be constantly engaged in reading the Veda; patient of all extremities, universally benevolent, with a mind intent on the Supreme Being; a perpetual giver, but no receiver of gifts; with tender affection for all animated bodies. Let him slide backwards and forwards on the ground; or let him stand a whole day on tiptoe; or let him continue in motion rising and sitting alternately: but at sunrise, at noon, and at sunset, let him go to the waters and bathe. In the hot season, let him sit exposed to five fires; four blazing around him, with the sun above: in the rains, let him stand uncovered, without even a mantle, and where the clouds pour the heaviest showers; in the cold season, let him wear humid vesture; and let him increase by degrees the austerity of his devotion. Then, having reposited his holy fires, as the law directs, in his mind, let him live without external fire, without a mansion, wholly silent, feeding on roots and fruit. Or the hermit may bring food from a town, having received it in a basket of leaves, in his naked hand, or in a potsherd; and then let him swallow eight mouthfuls. These and other rules must a Brahmin, who retires to the woods, diligently practise; and, for the purpose of uniting his soul with the divine spirit, let him study the various *Upanishads* of scripture. Having thus performed religious acts in a forest during the third portion of his life, let him become a *Sannyâsi* for the fourth portion of it, abandoning all sensual affections, and wholly reposing in the Supreme

[5] Works of Sir William Jones, vol. ix. p. 386, 387.

Spirit. Let him not wish for death; let him not wish for life; let him expect his appointed time, as a hired servant expects his wages[6]."

Such is the idea of human perfection which the Hindoo legislator had formed to himself. Few, perhaps, ever fulfilled all the required conditions of this sublime state; but it is not on the side of bodily indulgence that the great penitents have generally erred. In reality, they seem to have regarded their bodies as their most deadly enemies, to which they were for their sins tied down and chained for a season, and which they, therefore, considered it praiseworthy to torture and lead as speedily as possible to perdition, that they might escape from so disgraceful a connexion. This, however, must be understood of the sincere and heart-stricken penitents only; the greater number are the slaves of mere vanity, submitting to bodily sufferings, that they may enjoy the solace of being regarded as a marvel by the unthinking crowd.

When a Brahmin, from whatever motive, determines to forsake the world, he communicates his design to the principal men of his caste, whom he entreats to instal him in his high office. The rite is accompanied by numerous ceremonies. First, a fortunate day is chosen—for among the Hindoos many days are regarded as highly inauspicious;—this being arrived, he bathes, and proceeds to the place appointed, taking along with him ten pieces of cloth, four of which, dyed of a deep yellow, are for his own use, the other six to be distributed among the officiating Brahmins. The remainder of the eremitical apparatus are, a long bamboo cane[7] with seven knots, a gourd scooped and dried, an antelope's skin, some small pieces of silver or copper money, flowers, rice-grains tinged red,

[6] Institutes of Menu, chap. vi. ver. 2—45.

[7] Menu describes the Brahminical staff, chap. ii. ver. 46.

sandal-wood, &c. A nauseous preparation is then compounded, and the aspirant quaffs it off, in order to evince his resolution of no longer consulting the pleasures of the senses.

The officiating *Guru* now whispers in his ear certain *mantras*, or spells, together with the rules of conduct to be observed in his new condition. He is then clothed in a yellow garment, his triple cord is cut through, in token of his renunciation of caste, and the small lock of hair, which the Brahmins and other Hindoos suffer to grow on the crown of the head, is shaved off. These, and a few other ceremonies being completed, he takes up his staff, his gourd, and his antelope's skin, and having thrice drank water from his natural pitcher, and recited the necessary *mantras*, he is constituted a *Sannyâsi*, and, according to the strict rules of his order, has no further concern with the affairs of this world.

The principal rules observed by these ascetics are the following: the Sannyâsi, every morning, after bathing, must rub his whole body with ashes; eat but once a day; abstain from betel; avoid even looking at a woman; shave his beard, his mustaches, and his whole head every month; wear wooden clogs[8]; when he travels, he must carry in one hand his seven-knotted staff, in the other his gourd, and the antelope skin under his arm. The gourd serves for carrying water, and the skin makes a convenient seat. He must always subsist upon alms, which he has a right to demand. Thus, some Sannyâsis grow extremely

[8] This species of shoe, with which Hindoo ascetics are represented in several of the plates to Sonnerat, is very convenient, being no otherwise fastened to the foot than by a peg, the extremity of which passes between the great toe and the second. It is worn by the Sannyâsis for cleanliness, as they would be defiled by going barefooted or in leather shoes. Dubois, p. 353.

rich; but the wealth thus acquired it is their duty to distribute in alms, or to expend in the construction of public works, such as caravansaries, temples, tanks, and reservoirs. They are likewise hospitable to travellers, and such as come to visit them. They are directed to erect their hermitage on the banks of lakes or rivers, for the convenience of bathing, which forms an important part of their discipline [9].

In order to convey a correct idea of the life and practices of the ascetics with which India at present swarms, we will borrow the account given of them by two men, who had been novices, but returned again to the world. "I was a novice," said the first, "under a celebrated Sannyâsi, who had fixed his hermitage in a remote situation near Bellaburam. As he prescribed, I devoted great part of the night to watchfulness, and to endeavours to expel from my mind every thought whatever. Agreeably to other instructions, daily repeated to me by my master, I exerted all my might to restrain my breathing until I was ready to faint away. These violent efforts brought on the most profuse perspiration from all parts of my body. At length, one day, while I was practising as usual, I imagined I saw before me the full moon, very bright, but tremulous. At another time, I was led to fancy, in broad day, that I was plunged into thick darkness. My spiritual guide, who had often predicted to me that the practice of penitence and contemplation would disclose to me very wonderful appearances, was quite delighted with my spiritual progress. He then enjoined me some new tasks, equally difficult; adding that the time was not far distant when I should find still more surprising effects from my penitence. But at last, wearied out with these tiresome follies, which I feared

[9] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 350—354.

would altogether discompose my brain, I gave them up, and returned to my old employment of a labourer."

The other devotee, who had also retired with his master to a desert place, where they might practise their devotions undisturbed, gives a very whimsical description of his spiritual experience. Amongst other useful exercises he was ordered, he says, to look steadily at the sky, with his head elevated, and without winking. This experiment he was directed to repeat several times every day, until the organs of sight were inflamed in an extraordinary degree, accompanied by violent head-achs. Sometimes he fancied he saw sparks, and sometimes globes of fire, in the air. The Sannyâsi, whose disciple he was, appeared highly satisfied with his proficiency. He was himself blind of one eye, and the pupil, upon inquiry, found with dismay that he had lost it by the very experiment which he had imposed upon him. Fearing that his penances might end in the total loss of sight, he left the one-eyed sage to enjoy his contemplations alone. One of the most extraordinary exercises taught by this spiritual preceptor was a secret for preventing every particle of air confined in the body from escaping. For this purpose he directed the novice to stop the ears with his two thumbs; the little-finger and the ring-finger were brought together and held the lips closed; each fore-finger blocked up an eye; and each middle-finger pressed upon a nostril. The opposite extremity of the body was secured by the penitent's sitting accurately upon his heel. In this position, says he, I shut one of my nostrils with one of my middle-fingers, and drew in as long a breath as I could through the other, which I then closed, and allowed the breath to escape gradually through the first; an experiment which I frequently repeated, but always taking care never to inhale and respire by the same nostril. As I had

some difficulty, observed the traveller, in comprehending the trick which he had described, I requested him to place himself in the proper attitude. This he did most readily; and never, surely, was there seen any thing more laughable than the posture he put himself into for a few moments; but which he was soon obliged to quit, in order to give way to the bursts of laughter which the remembrance of his past follies still provoked[10].

In order to throw some light upon the nature of the visions or strange appearances beheld by these fanatics, after a course of practice similar to those above described, let us borrow from a letter of Sir Isaac Newton an account of experiments made for very different purposes by that great philosopher: "The observation you mention in Mr. Boyle's book of Colours, I once made upon myself with the hazard of my eyes. The manner was this: I looked a very little while upon the sun in the looking-glass with my right eye, and then turned my eyes into a dark corner of my chamber, and winked, to observe the impression made, and the circles of colours which encompassed it, and how they decayed by degrees, and at last vanished. This I repeated a second and a third time. At the third time, when the phantasm of light and colours about it were almost vanished, intending my fancy upon them to see their last appearance, I found, to my amazement, that they began to return, and by little and little to become as lively and vivid as when I had newly looked upon the sun. But when I ceased to intend my fancy upon them, they vanished again. After this, I found that as often as I went into the dark, and intended my mind upon them, as when a man looks earnestly to see any thing which is difficult to be seen, I could make the phantasm return without looking any more

[10] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 357—359.

upon the sun; and the oftener I made it return the more easily I could make it return again. And, at length, by repeating this, without looking any more upon the sun, I made such an impression on my eye, that if I looked upon the clouds, or a book, or any bright object, I saw upon it a round bright spot of light like the sun; and, which is still stranger, though I looked upon the sun with my right eye only, and not with my left, yet my fancy began to make the impression on my left eye as well as upon my right. For if I shut my right eye, and looked upon a book or the clouds with my left eye, I could see the spectrum of the sun almost as plain as with my right eye, if I did but intend my fancy a little while upon it; for, at first, if I shut my right eye, and looked with my left, the spectrum of the sun did not appear till I intended my fancy upon it; but, by repeating, this appeared every time more easily. And now, in a few hours' time, I had brought my eyes to such a pass, that I could look upon no bright object with either eye, but I saw the sun before me, so that I durst neither write nor read; but to recover the use of my eyes, shut myself up in my chamber, made dark, for three days together, and used all means to divert my imagination from the sun. For if I thought upon him, I presently saw his picture, though I was in the dark; but by keeping in the dark, and employing my mind about other things, I began, in three or four days, to have some use of my eyes again; and by forbearing a few days longer to look upon bright objects, recovered them pretty well, though not so well, but that for some months after, the spectrum of the sun began to return as often as I began to meditate upon the phenomenon, even though I lay in bed at midnight, with my curtains drawn; but now I have been very well for many years, though I am apt to think, that, if I durst venture my eyes, I could

still make the phantasm return, by the power of my fancy [11]."

But the forms of penance and mortification above described are mere amusement compared with those which the *Yogis* sometimes inflict upon themselves, incited by the exhortations of their legislator Menu. Of these wretched fanatics, some keep their hands closed till they are pierced through by the growth of the nails. Others make vows to remain standing in a certain position for years, with their hands held up above their heads, until the arms wither away from inaction, and become fixed and powerless. Others, again, undertake to carry a cumbrous load, or drag after them a heavy chain, which is sometimes fixed in the most tender part of the body. Some crawl, like reptiles, upon the earth for whole years, or until they have thus made the circuit of a vast empire. Others measure with their bodies the road to Jagannâth, or, assuming as nearly as possible the form of a ball, or a hedge-hog ensconced in his prickly coat, roll along, like the Indian in Vathek [12], from the banks of the Indus to those of the Ganges, collecting, as they move in this attitude, money to build a temple, to dig a well, or to atone for some secret crime. Some swing before a slow fire in that torrid clime, or hang for a certain time suspended, with their heads downwards, over the fiercest flames [13].

Fryer, nearly two hundred years ago, beheld various examples of this madness. Of three men who had made a vow to remain in a standing posture for sixteen years, one had fulfilled his fearful penance; the second had completed five, and the other three years

[11] Life of Locke, by Lord King, p. 217, 218; a work which all those who desire to comprehend one of the noblest characters of modern times will do well to study.

[12] "Teres atque rotundus," as Beckford humorously quotes.

[13] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 68, 69.

of torture. Their legs, prodigiously swelled and deeply ulcerated, became at last too weak to support their bodies, when they leaned on a pillow suspended from a tree. Others, turning their heads over their shoulders to gaze at the heavens, remain in that posture until it becomes impossible for them to resume the natural position, while, from the twist of the neck, nothing but liquids can pass into the stomach. The grand act of penitence, of sitting between five fires, commanded by Menu, was witnessed by Fryer. A Yogi exhibited this example of self-torture, the most tremendous, perhaps, that can be conceived, in the sight of a vast multitude, at a public festival, during forty days. "Early in the morning, after having seated himself on a quadrangular stage, he fell prostrate, and continued fervent in his devotions, till the sun began to have considerable power. He then rose, and stood on one leg, gazing stedfastly at the sun, while fires, each large enough, says the traveller, to roast an ox, were kindled at the four corners of the stage, the penitent counting his beads, and occasionally, with his pot of incense, throwing combustible materials into the fire to increase the flames. He next bowed himself down in the centre of the four fires, keeping his eyes still fixed upon the sun. Afterwards, placing himself upright on his head, with his feet elevated in the air, he stood for the extraordinary space of three hours in that inverted position; he then seated himself, with his legs across, and thus remained, sustaining the raging heat of the sun and the fires till the end of the day[14]."

[14] Cited by Mill, Hist. of Brit. India, vol. i. p. 353. Ward, vol. iii. p. 16—23, minutely describes the horrid tortures which the Sannyâsis inflict upon themselves at the festival of Kâli. They pierce their tongues with spits and canes; thrust sharp instruments through their sides; infix needles in their breasts; pierce the skin of their foreheads, and insert an iron rod in the socket, to which they suspend a lamp, that is kept burning all night. In this condition they dance before the idol.

Another very curious mode of performing penance is described in Sakontala. "Where," says the monarch, "is the holy retreat of Marîchi?" "A little beyond that grove, where you see," replies the nymph, "a pious Yogi, motionless as a pollard, holding his thick bushy hair, and fixing his eyes on the solar orb. Mark, his body is half covered with a white ant's edifice, made of raised clay; the skin of a snake supplies the place of his sacerdotal thread, and part of it girds his loins; a number of knotty plants encircle and wound his neck, and surrounding birds' nests almost conceal his shoulders." On arriving at the hermitage, the king exclaims, "I see, with equal amazement, both the pious and their awful retreat. It becomes, indeed, pure spirits to feed on balmy air, in a forest blooming with trees of life; to bathe in rills dyed yellow with the golden dust of the lotus, and to fortify their virtue in the mysterious bath; to meditate in caves, the pebbles of which are unblemished gems, and to restrain their passions, even though nymphs of exquisite beauty frolic around them: in this grove alone is attained the summit of true piety, to which other hermits in vain aspire [15]."

Other penitents, says Mill, bury themselves up to the neck in the ground, or even wholly below it, leaving only a little hole, through which they may breathe. They tear themselves with whips; they repose on beds of iron spikes; they chain themselves for life to the foot of a tree: the wild imagination of the race appears, in short, to have been racked to devise a sufficient variety of fantastic modes of tormenting themselves [16]. Their appearance in the midst of the wild woods, caves, rocks, or sterile sands, is indescribably grotesque. In most instances they are naked, except that their long hair, matted into ropes, intertwisted with adscititious locks from

[15] Works of Sir William Jones, vol. ix. p. 514, 516.
[16] History of British India, vol. i. p. 354.

the heads of other saints long in the sepulchre, is allowed to fall in confusion over their bodies, which it sometimes nearly covers, reaching to the ground on all sides. In this state a Yogi has far more the appearance of a wild beast than a man. His outstretched fingers, armed, in many cases, with nails of twenty years' growth, look like so many extraordinary horns; while his elf-locks, full of dust, and never combed, stream in the wind in a manner singularly savage[17]. Sometimes we find these fierce penitents clothed in tigers' skins, with a long piece of false hair mixed with mud wrapped round the head like a turban[18]; while others wander about with a number of small bells tied to their legs and arms, which they rattle with double violence on approaching a village, in order to give the inhabitants timely notice of their approach, that they may come out to meet them, and avoid the misfortunes brought down by their curses[19].

On other occasions these mendicants adorn their persons in the most fantastic manner. Their garments are of the deepest yellow, bordering upon red; a particoloured garment, formed of patchwork of all colours, is thrown over the shoulders for a cloak; while their turbans are made up of cloth of various hues, curiously braided together. In addition to this harlequin costume, the generality adorn their necks with several rows of necklaces of black beads, as large as nuts. Besides their ridiculous dress, the disciples of Vishnu, when they travel or go a begging, equip themselves with a round plate of brass, about a foot in diameter, and a large shell, called *sankha*, shaped like a sea-conch; with either of which they can make a sufficient noise to announce their approach from

[17] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 69.

[18] Ward, vol. iii. p. 12, 15.

[19] Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 238; Sakoontala, Act. iv. p. 441; Dubois, p. 52.

afar. With one hand they beat upon the brass plate with a stick, which makes a sound like a bell, and at the same time they apply the sankha to their mouth with the other hand, and by blowing into it, elicit a sharp monotonous sound. These two articles always forma portion of the travelling apparatus of a Vishnuite mendicant.

In addition to all these things, the Sannyâsis of this sect, the most noisy and impudent in all India, generally wear a plate of copper on the breast, upon which is engraved the image of the monkey-god, Hanumân, or some one of the *Avatâras*, or "manifestations" of Vishnu. Many likewise carry on their shoulders an iron ring, at each side of which is suspended a chafing-dish of the same metal, containing the fire required for burning incense when they sacrifice. Their right to demand alms has already been mentioned, and it is a right which they never fail to exercise; but it is chiefly when bound for some celebrated place of pilgrimage that they make use of it in all its plenitude. Collecting together in troops of many thousands, armed with clubs, bows, scythes, sabres, and matchlocks; some swinging their fiery censers, others striking on their gongs, others, again, eliciting from their conches the most discordant and horrific sounds; they spread themselves like an army of demoniacs over the country. On entering the villages, they quarter themselves in small parties on the inhabitants, who, from piety or terror, supply them with whatever they need. Sometimes, however, they encounter individuals or whole villages disinclined to the exercise of such expensive charity. The audacity of their tone and manner is then heightened. The wild dances and indecent songs, with which they commonly solicit alms, are exchanged for ferocious menaces. The whole crew crowd together. The contemplation of their numbers and force inspires boldness. At first, angry murmurs are heard among

the multitude; these are followed by wild uproar; all at once they set up a deafening shout, beating at the same time on their metallic plates, and exciting harsh, shrill, discordant sounds from their sankhas. When all these arts fail of success, they exercise their physical superiority, enter the houses, break the earthen dishes, and overturn every thing within their reach.

The beings most highly venerated by these fanatics are the ape, the monkey, the Coromandel eagle, and the cobra de capello. To kill or maltreat any of these sacred animals is a crime almost without expiation; or which can only be expiated by the death and resuscitation of a human victim. This ceremony is termed *pahvadam*, and is intended, like most of their other rites, to extort charity from the rich. As soon as an individual has been fixed upon, whom it is thought proper to accuse of any of those crimes which require the performance of the *pahvadam*, the circumstance is widely bruited through the country. The residence of the culprit becomes the point of attraction. Thousands of Yogis seize their sounding plates and their great shells, and hasten to the scene. The criminal is arrested. A tent is then pitched at a small distance, which is immediately encompassed by the crowded ranks of savage mendicants, eager for excitement; more eager still for lucre.

The principal Yogis now select from among the assembled multitude a person who consents to be offered up in sacrifice, and exhibits him to the gaze of the crowd. He is then bared for sacrifice; an incision is made in his abdomen, and, as the blood gushes from the wound, his senses seem to forsake him, he tumbles on the ground, and counterfeits death. The body is now removed into the tent, and laid out as a corpse. "Of the great concourse of

people gathered together, part watches night and day round the tent, which nobody is suffered to approach; while another division surrounds the house of the individual who has given occasion for the ceremony. Both parties raise continual cries and frightful howlings, which, being mixed with the clanking sound of the brazen plates and the shrill squeak of the *sankha*, produce a confusion and uproar, in the midst of which it is almost impossible to exist. This overwhelming disorder continues without interruption, until the person who was the cause of it pays the fine imposed upon him, which generally exceeds his means. In the meantime, the inhabitants of the village and of the neighbourhood, finding it impossible to live in the midst of the confusion and disorder occasioned by the fanatical crowd, come to terms with the chiefs, and pay at least a part of what has been required of the culprit, in order to obtain a speedy termination of the *pahvadam*, and to induce the great multitude to go to their homes. The chiefs, when satisfied, repair to the tent to conclude the ceremony, which is effected by restoring to life the pretended dead man, who lies stretched out before them. For this purpose they choose one of their number, and, making an incision in his thigh, they collect the blood which runs from it, and sprinkle the body of the sham corpse, which, being restored by the efficacy of this simple ceremony, is delivered over alive to those who assist at it, and who have no doubt whatever of the reality of the resurrection. After this ceremony, for effacing all traces of the crime or the affront which had been complained of, the fine is laid out in a grand entertainment to all the persons present, and when that is over, the whole of them quietly return to their homes[20]."

[20] Dubois, p. 53—55; Mr. Cruso's Journal, in Oriental Memoirs, vol. iv. p. 86, 87; Forbes, vol. i. p. 68, 69, 202, 278.

The practices of the Sannyâsis, Yogis, and other religious mendicants, are not always, however, of this criminal description. They are naturally great travellers, the pleasure of wandering from place to place being the principal delight of their lives. Many pilgrims are met with who have not only made the tour of India, but have penetrated through Persia into the Russian empire, and extended their rambles as far as Moscow. Bell of Antermony saw in Mongolia one of these mendicants standing on the brink of a stream, where a number of boys were employed in fishing, who, as often as any thing was caught, purchased it of the mischievous urchins, and immediately restored it alive to its native element[21]. These distant journeys are frequently undertaken by the Yogis with commercial views. For it is usual with them to carry with them in their pilgrimages from the sea-coasts into the interior, pearls, corals, spices, and other precious articles, of small bulk; which, on their return, they exchange for musk, gold-dust, &c., concealing them with facility in their hair or girdles; and by this manner carry on, in proportion to their numbers, no inconsiderable traffic [22].

The manner in which this contraband traffic is carried on is described as follows in the life of Tavernier: "One evening, shortly after his arrival at Raolconda, our traveller was accosted by a banyan[23] of mean appearance,—whose whole apparel consisted of the miserable handkerchief which was tied about his head, and his girdle, or kummerbund,—who, after the usual salutation, sat himself down by his side.

[21] Life of Bell, in the second volume of 'Lives of celebrated Travellers.'

[22] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 214, 215.

[23] This *banyan*, as he is termed by Tavernier, was no doubt a *Yogi*. Our older travellers were but little acquainted with the distinctions of classes among the Hindoos.

Tavernier had long learned to pay but little attention to exteriors in this class of people, since he had found that many of them, whose appearance denoted extreme poverty, and might have excited the charitable feelings of the passer-by, nevertheless carried concealed about their persons a collection of diamonds, which those who pitied them would have been extremely proud to possess. He therefore conducted himself politely towards the Hindoo, who, after a few civilities had passed between them, inquired through an interpreter whether he would like to purchase a few rubies. Tavernier having replied that he should be glad to examine them, the Indian drew forth from his girdle about twenty ruby rings, all of which our traveller considered too small for his purpose, though there was one among them which he consented to purchase. As the jewel-merchant seemed to regard the attendance of the governor's servants as a restraint upon his actions, farther conversation was delayed until evening prayer should have called them to the mosque: but three only attended to the *muezzin*'s[24] summons: the fourth remained to enact the spy during their absence. Tavernier, however, whom a long residence in the east had rendered politic, now suddenly recollected that he was in want of bread; and the trusty Mohammedan being despatched in quest of it, he was left alone with the interpreter and the merchant. As soon as the spy was departed, the Indian began to untie his long hair, which, according to custom, he wore plaited in many a fold upon the crown of his head; and as it parted and fell down upon his shoulders, a small packet, wrapped in a shred of muslin, dropped out. This proved to be a diamond of singular size and beauty, which Tavernier, when it

[24] The *muezzin* is, in Mohammedan countries, a public crier, who assembles the people to prayer by proclamation from the minaret or tower of a mosque.

was put into his hands, regarded with the greatest interest and curiosity. "You need not," said the Indian, "amuse yourself with examining the stone at present. To-morrow, if you will meet me alone at nine o'clock in the morning, on the outside of the town, you may view it at your leisure." He then stated the exact price of his gem, and departed. The traveller, who now coveted this stone with the eagerness and passion of a lover, did not fail to repair at the appointed moment to the spot, with the necessary sum, in gold pagodas, in his bag, and after considerable negotiation succeeded in making it his own [25]."

The number of these mendicants is supposed to amount in India to several millions. Wherever there is a fair, a festival, or a sacrifice, thither they throng, attracted by the savour of good cheer, which they have the faculty of scenting from afar. On the approach of any great festival, therefore, you discover beneath the sacred groves, in the precincts of the temples, crowds of devotees of both sexes; the Gosain in a state of perfect nudity; the Yoghi with his lark or parroquet, his sole companion for a thousand miles; the Guru, of superior rank in the Brahminical hierarchy, travelling in oriental splendour to visit the temples and superintend the seminaries; the Brahmachâri, with a curtain of gauze over his mouth to prevent his inhaling animalcula, and a soft broom in his hand, with which he cautiously sweeps the ground before him that he may not tread upon an insect! There also you behold numerous fanatics reduced to skeletons by abstinence, others nearly bursting from having crammed themselves under a vow with consecrated ghee. Numbers of these penitents frequently visit the English cities of India. On one occasion more

[25] Lives of celebrated Travellers, vol. i. p. 179, 180.

than two hundred crossed over from a temple on the continent to Bombay; fine looking young men, athletic, bold, and impudent, beyond what is usual even with their impudent brotherhood. As they quickly rendered themselves a nuisance even to the Hindoos, the governor became desirous of removing them from the island without offending the Brahmins, who are the natural patrons of all imposture. The ditch surrounding the fortifications, of great extent and considerable breadth, at that time requiring cleaning, an order was issued that all vagabonds, mendicants, and idle persons, who could not give a proper account of themselves, should immediately be employed in this labour. The next morning not a travelling Yogi, Gosain, Sannyâsi, or any one of the fraternity, was to be found upon the island [26].

The Hindoos, who naturally entertain a lofty opinion of their religious men, affirm that even the wild beasts of the forests respect them. That in some cases they merely abstain from doing them any injury; but that, in others, when the force of their holiness is transcendental, they come voluntarily to their hermitage, lick their hands, and fondle and lie by them for hours. This may very possibly sometimes happen, when a man with no other occupation or amusement, thoroughly tames a tiger's whelp, so as not only to retain a hold on its affections, when it has been restored to liberty, but be likewise able to restrain it, while in his presence, from injuring others. Notwithstanding, it is certain that all tigers are not thus docile. In the Sunderbunds, and other districts where they greatly abound in the woods, they occasionally, when more tender provision fails, are fain to content themselves with the tough and almost fleshless

[26] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 231, 465; iii. 14, 24; iv. 24. Asiatic Researches, xi. 504, 507; xii. 466. Buchanan, Journey, &c. i. 336; ii. 76.

bodies of the Yogis, who disappear one after another; and if you inquire of their remaining companions, they will relate how and when they were devoured. A traveller, who visited Sâgar island in the year 1806, was informed by a Yogi that six of his companions had been devoured by tigers within the last three months: that, while absent in the forest gathering sticks, he heard their cries, and on drawing near, and looking over the wall of the temple in which they lived, he saw the tigers dragging them by the neck into the woods. Many hermits perish in this manner every year [27].

The priests of Eklinga, in Rajast'han, are denominated *Gosain*, or *Goswâmi*, which term properly signifies "an owner of kine," but is now generally used in the sense of "a holy man, a religious personage and teacher." They all wear the distinguishing mark of the faith of Siva, which is a crescent on the forehead. Their hair is braided and forms a species of tiara round the head, which is frequently adorned with a chaplet of the lotus-seed. Like the other ascetics they disfigure their bodies with ashes, and wear garments of a deep orange colour. Their dead are interred in a sitting posture, and the tumuli [28] which are erected over them are generally of a conical form. Many Gosains who have made a vow of celibacy still follow secular professions, and distinguish themselves both in commerce and in arms. "The mercantile Gosains are among the richest individuals

[27] Bishop Heber, Narrative, &c. vol. ii. 265, 267; Ward, vol. iii. 342.

[28] I have seen, says Colonel Tod, a cemetery of these, each of very small dimensions, which may be described as so many concentric rings of earth, diminishing to the apex, crowned with a cylindrical stone pillar. One of the disciples of Siva was performing rites to the manes, strewing leaves of an evergreen, and sprinkling water over the graves. Annals of Rajast'han, i. 517.

in India, and there are several at Oodipoor who enjoy high favour, and who were found very useful when the Mahrattas demanded a war-contribution, as their privileged character did not prevent their being offered and taken as hostages for its payment. The Gosains who profess arms partake of the character of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. They live in monasteries scattered over the country, possess lands, and beg, or serve for pay when called upon. As defensive soldiers they are good. Siva, their patron, is the god of war, and like him they make great use of intoxicating herbs, and even of spirituous liquors. In Mewar they can always muster several hundreds of the Canfara Yogi, or 'split-ear ascetics,' so called from the habit of piercing the ear and placing therein a ring of the conch-shell, which is their battle-trumpet. Both Brahmins and Rajpoots, and even Goojers, can belong to this order. The poet Chund gives an animated description of the body-guard of the king of Canouj, which was composed of these monastic warriors [29]."

An anecdote, in which a Gosain plays a principal part, is told of Ratanali, the "lustre of jewels," a famous princess of India, who flourished many centuries ago. Sadara Jai Singh, the "lion of victory," Rajah of Pattan, had seven wives, and many mistresses, but Ratanali, a woman of superior worth and transcendent beauty, was the favourite, notwithstanding that she had no child. The other ladies of the harem, jealous of Ratanali, put in practice every possible artifice to estrange from her the Rajah's affections, but in vain. At length, when it was discovered that she also was pregnant, their rage knew no bounds. "According to the superstitious customs of the Hindoos, they employed charms and talismans to prevent the birth

[29] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 516, 517.

of the child; and the beloved sultana, superstitious and credulous as themselves, imagined their spells had taken effect, and that while she remained in the palace, her infant would never see the light. Impressed with these ideas, she departed with a splendid retinue to sacrifice at a celebrated temple on the banks of the Nerbuddah, and after a long journey arrived late in the evening at a sacred grove and lake, about ten miles from the river, on the very spot where Dhuboy now stands. There the princess pitched her tents, intending to conclude her journey the next morning. In this grove dwelt a Gosain, who had renounced the world, and passed his life in religious retirement. On hearing of Ratanali's arrival he requested to be admitted into her presence; a request which is seldom refused to those holy men: he desired her not to proceed any farther, as that grove was sacred, and there in a few days she would be delivered of a son. The princess followed his advice, and continued in her encampment until the birth of her child; who, at the Gosain's desire, was named *Viseldon*, or the "child of twenty months." This pleasing news was soon conveyed to the Rajah, who declared young Viseldon heir to his throne; and finding his mother delighted with the spot where she had obtained the blessing, and fearful of returning among the ladies of the harem, he ordered the lake to be enlarged, the groves extended, and a city erected, surrounded by a strong fortification, and beautified with every costly decoration. The most eminent artists were engaged to build this famous city, and over them was placed a man of superior abilities, who lived to complete the immense work, thirty-two years after its commencement. At that time Viseldon had succeeded to his father on the throne of Pattan, but generally resided at the place of his nativity; where, on dismissing the several artists, he made them suitable presents; but

desirous of more amply gratifying the man to whose superior taste it was indebted for such extraordinary beauty, he desired him to name a reward for his services. The artist respectfully replied, that being happy in the prince's favour he wanted neither money nor jewels; but as the place had not yet received any particular name, he entreated it might be called after his own, Dhubowey, which was immediately granted, and this, with a slight alteration, is the name it still retains [30]."

Among the priests of India there is one particular class who, in their authority and condition, bear a strong resemblance to the bishops and archbishops of the catholic church. These are the *Gurus* [31]. At stated seasons these proud priests make the circuit of their respective dioceses, examine into the conduct of the inferior priests, and administer certain important rites at the temples. Such among them as make profession of superior sanctity greatly extend their pilgrimages, in order to perform the *Upasyda*, and other solemn ceremonies, at their colleges, and in their sacred groves [32].

When the superior Gurus appear in public, they are generally surrounded by every circumstance of oriental magnificence and splendour, more particularly during the visitation of their dioceses. Seated in a rich palanquin, or on the back of an elephant, they move along in the style of princes. Numerous bodies of horse and foot, splendidly appointed, and armed with glittering weapons, form their guard, and surround them on their march. Bands of musi-

[30] Oriental Memoirs, ii. 335, 337.

[31] The word *Guru* properly signifies "master." Fathers and mothers are therefore sometimes called *Mahá-Gurus*, or "great masters:" kings are *Gurus* of their kingdoms; masters, of their servants. Dubois, p. 64.

[32] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 212.

cians, furnished with all the instruments of the country, precede them. Flags and standards, of various form and colour, and adorned with pictured representations of the gods, wave and flash in the sun. A part of their officers move at the head of the procession, chaunting odes in their praise, or admonishing the awe-stricken spectators to receive the mighty Guru with becoming honour and reverence. Incense, and other costly perfumes, which are burned in profusion, scatter their grateful odours among the multitude; while the road over which the priest is to pass is strewed with new garments. Triumphal arches, of boughs and flowers, are erected at intervals. Troops of beautiful dancing girls from the temples, relieved from time to time by fresh bands, inflame the imaginations of the crowd with lascivious songs and voluptuous dances. Meantime all those of inferior rank keep at an awful distance from the Guru, lest he should inhale an atmosphere polluted by plebeian breath. At a certain distance before the procession are a number of pioneers, to clear the road, and "make his paths straight," by removing all obstacles, filling up ravines and hollows, and levelling every impertinent elevation. The multitude, as the holy man moves along, fall down and worship; then join in the perpetually increasing train, and make the very sky resound with their shouts of joy.

It must not, however, be understood, that all Gurus are thus attended and received. This pomp and magnificence belong only to the pontiffs. Those of inferior rank content themselves with an ordinary palanquin, a sorry horse, or a bullock, which last is the favourite animal of the class; and some there are who, like the renowned son of Scriblerus, are compelled to make their own legs their compasses. But in general they rank as the first and most distinguished order of society. The reverence paid to

them exceeds that with which the gods themselves are treated, who are, in fact, supposed by the vulgar to be inferior to those their ministers in power.

The principal object of their visitations, which sometimes extend through a circle of two hundred leagues, is to amass money. In addition to the fines levied on all transgressors of the rules of caste, the Gurus exact from their flocks a very considerable tribute, termed *Padaka-nikai*, or an offering at the feet. No degree of suffering or distress can excuse a Hindoo from paying this tribute. The pontiff inexorably demands his dues. In vain does the poor man, subdued and debased by indigence, approach the haughty priest in an attitude of abject humiliation, entreating him to abate something of his demands, pleading his profound misery, and imploring his clemency and forgiveness. His prayers are heard with scorn and indignation. He is loaded, in presence of his countrymen, with reproaches and abuse; and the servile multitude is commanded to cast mud or cow-dung in his face. Should this ignominious treatment fail to succeed, the Guru insists upon being supplied with a person to labour for him during a certain period, or until the money is paid. Occasionally, when it is found that the disciple is wholly incapable of complying with the demands of his avarice, a Guru has been known to force away his wife from him in lieu of payment, and either retain her for himself, or deliver her up to one of his dependants. Finally, he menaces the wretched being with his *curse*—an evil of such magnitude in the imagination of a Hindoo, that there is no degree of poverty or suffering to which he will not cheerfully submit rather than encounter it.

The power and authority, both temporal and spiritual, of this dreaded class of men, are extraordinary. Like the pope and his representatives, they profess

to grant remission of sins by their benediction, or even by their look. They are therefore approached with the greatest anxiety and the most abject prostration. From their sacred hands, the smallest present is regarded as of inestimable value; such, for example, as a little cow-dung ashes to beautify the forehead; a flower, crumbs from their table, or the water in which they have washed their feet, and which is preserved as a holy relic, or drank as a charm.

The residence of these pontiffs is called *singhâsana*, or the throne. They are sufficiently numerous in the various provinces of India, as each sect and caste has its own pontiff. Other Gurus are attached as chaplains to the household of kings or princes, whom they accompany on all their journeys and expeditions. These, for the most part, live in a style of magnificence and splendour which eclipses that of kings. Besides the presents which they constantly receive from these rich and powerful disciples, they frequently enjoy grants of landed estates. Excepting during their visitations, which recur not more than once, perhaps, in three or four years, the Gurus generally live in retirement, in a kind of monasteries, called *matam*. These are for the most part situated in the neighbourhood of the great pagodas, or in large cities. Here they give audience to their numerous disciples, of whom many come from afar to worship them, to receive their blessing and gift, to offer them presents, or to consult them respecting some affair of caste. When married, the dignity descends from father to son; but those who remain single, sometimes choose coadjutors in their lifetime, who succeed them on their death; or a successor is nominated by the other pontiffs[33].

[33] Dubois, p. 64—72. Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 212; vol. ii. p. 405.

From the consideration of the rights and privileges of the Gurus, we proceed to the *Bhâts* and *Chârans*, or bards and minstrels of India, a class of men in many respects still more important. Poets, in the early ages of the world, were the only historians and legislators. From them mankind received their first lessons in prudence and wisdom. Their songs, chaunted on the eve of battle, incited to glorious actions, and clothed them, when successfully performed, with immortality. On the other hand, the contempt and obloquy which they pour forth upon mean and pusillanimous deeds, forcibly deters the wavering from the commission of them. The bad are dead alike to satire and to praise.

In India the bards stand higher in public estimation even than the Brahmins. From them the prince learns the history and genealogy of his line, in which both they and the *Chârans*, or encomiasts, are always deeply versed. They frequently attain very high rank in the palaces of India, and are employed as ambassadors to represent their sovereigns in the courts of other monarchs. On other occasions they occupy a humbler, but perhaps not less useful station: they are the chief carriers of the country, and also conduct the caravans through the wildest and most desolate regions, their sacred character overawing the lawless Rajpoot, the Kholi, the Bhill, and even the plundering Sahrac of the desert, who, fearless on all other occasions, dread the anathema of these singular races. The traveller, therefore, who desires to pursue his route from the interior to the coast, by Jalare, Sanchore, Brenmahl, and Radhunpoor, plâces himself under their convoy, and is in safety.

However, the traditions of the country relate certain instances of feuds between these Bhâts, who act as leaders of caravans, which not only expose their own lives to imminent peril, but the lives also of those

whom they undertake to protect. "Paimah Naik, the leader of one of the largest *tandas*, or caravans, which frequent the desert for salt, had left his convoy, and with his brethren came to exhibit his wounds and fractures received in a fray with the leaders of another caravan. Both were Bhâts: Paimah was the head of the Bhamunia Bhâts, so called from the place of their abode; and he counted forty thousand beasts of burden under his control. Shama had no distinctive epithet; he had no home separate from his *tanda*. His little state, when not in motion, was on the highways; hence those who dwell entirely with their cattle are styled *ooboh punti*, 'on the road.' Shama had taken advantage of the greater portion of Paimah's caravan being detached, to revenge an ancient feud; and had shown himself quite an adept in club law, as the broken heads of his opponents disclosed. To reconcile them was impossible; and as the case was to be decided, not by the scales of abstract justice, but by calculating which contributed most in duties, Paimah, by this summary process, more than from sympathy to his wounded honour, gained a victory by the exclusion of his rival[34]."

An account, in some respects different from this, was given to Bishop Heber, during his journey through the western provinces. "The Bhâts," he observes, "are a sacred order all through Rajpootana. Their race was especially created by Mahâdêva (Siva), for the purpose of guarding his sacred bull; but they lost this honourable office through their cowardice. The god had a pet lion also; and as the favourite animals were kept in the same apartment, the bull was eaten almost every day, in spite of all the noise that the Bhâts could make, greatly to the grief of Siva, and to the increase of his trouble, since he had to create a new bull in the room of every one which

[34] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 702, 703.

fell a victim to the ferocity of his companion. Under these circumstances the deity formed a new race of men, the Châranş, of equal piety and tuneful powers, but more courageous than the Bhâts, and made them the wardens of his menagerie. The Bhâts, however, still retained their functions of singing the praises of gods and heroes; and, as the hereditary guardians of history and pedigree, are held in higher estimation even than the Brahmins themselves, among the haughty and fierce nobles of Rajpootana. In the yet milder districts to the south-west, the more warlike Châranş, however, take their place in popular reverence. A few years back it was usual for merchants or travellers going through Malwah and Guzerat, to hire a Châran to protect them, and the sanctity of his name was generally sufficient. If robbers appeared, he stepped forward waving his long white garments, and denouncing, in verse, infamy and disgrace on all who should injure travellers under the protection of the holy minstrel of Siva. If this failed, he stabbed himself with his dagger, generally in the left arm, declaring that his blood was on their heads; and if all failed, he was bound in honour to stab himself to the heart,—a catastrophe of which there was little danger, since the violent death of such a person was enough to devote the whole land to barrenness, and all who occasioned it to an everlasting abode in Padulon.

"The Bhâts protect nobody; but to kill or beat one of them would be regarded as very disgraceful and ill-omened; and presuming on this immunity, and on the importance attached to that sort of renown which it confers, they are said often to extort money from their wealthy neighbours by promises of spreading their great name, and threats of making them infamous, and even of blasting their prospects. A wealthy merchant in Indore, some years since, had a quarrel with one of these men, who made a clay image, which

he called after the merchant's name; and daily in the bazaar, and in the different temples, addressed it with bitter and reproachful language, intermixed with the most frightful curses which an angry poet could invent. There was no redress; and the merchant, though a man of great power and influence at court, was advised to bribe him into silence: this he refused to do, and the matter went on for several months, till a number of the merchant's friends subscribed a considerable sum, of which, with much submission and joined hands, they entreated the Bhât to accept. 'Alas!' was his answer, 'why was not this done before? Had I been conciliated in time, your friend might yet have prospered: but now, though I shall be silent henceforth, I have already said too much against him; and when did the imprecations of a bard, so long persisted in, fall to the ground unaccomplished?' The merchant, as it happened, was really overtaken by some severe calamities; and the popular faith in the powers of the minstrel character is now more than ever confirmed [35]."

The condition and importance of the bard are more elevated and extensive, however, than might, from the above recital, be supposed. Like the troubadours and minstrels of Europe, during the middle ages, and the *aoidoi* of remote antiquity, they are principally occupied in chaunting their own verses, or legends from the mythology of India. Their style of musical recitation is not unpleasing even to a stranger, as the beauty of the poetry is enhanced by a sweet modulation of the voice, and masculine graceful action and delivery. The subject of their songs, like that of our olden ballads, is the praise of some renowned warrior,—a victory, some tragical event of contemporary history, or the flattery of some powerful patron. Every Hindoo rajah and

[35] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 453, 455.

Mahratta chieftain has his family bard, who, on all public occasions and visits of ceremony, attends in the feudal hall, or joins the processions and pageants singing the praises of the prince in the hyperbolical and highly figurative language of the East. On other occasions they offer themselves as security to the different governments for the payment of their revenue, for the honesty and fidelity of the zemindars, patals, &c. They likewise become guarantees for the performance of bonds between individuals, and for the faith of treaties between rival princes. And no other pledge is held so sacred as this; for upon its infringement, the Bhât, proceeding to the dwelling of the offender, will either shed his own blood or that of one of his family, imprecating upon the head of the guilty the most dreadful vengeance of the gods. When the Bhâts enter into an agreement with either prince or community, instead of signing their names, or affixing their seals, as is customary among the other tribes, they draw upon the paper the figure of the *catarra*, or dagger, their usual instrument of death.

But the sacred character of their persons frequently impels the Bhâts into the commission of injustice, and a contempt for laws and government. According to ancient usage, they are supposed to be exempt from the payment of taxes, and for the maintenance of this privilege, even while their countrymen are crushed to the earth by impositions, they are at all times ready to shed their blood. The general interests of humanity are set at naught. To every demand that they should contribute their quota, in order to lessen the burdens of their countrymen, they sternly reply, "it is not in the bond." An example of this debasing selfishness occurred at Neriad, in western India during the wars in which the English were the allies of the Mahrattas. The inhabitants, twice assessed and

plundered within three months, were reduced to the extreme of misery. On every side houses were seen robbed of every moveable, and families who had delivered up their last mite, even the garments from their bodies, were now wandering about in nakedness and poverty. Upon such as were backward in yielding up their property, torture was mercilessly inflicted. Under these circumstances it was expected that the Bhâts would consent to bear a part of the public burdens, and thus preserve a portion at least of their townsmen from utter ruin. But they continued firm in their determination; and when convened and questioned by the English, replied that, although it was in their power to discharge a still greater sum than was required of them, they were resolved to brave the violence of the Mahratta, and preferred death to submission. The conquerors not relaxing the rigour of their demands, the whole tribe of Bhâts, men, women, and children, armed with daggers, repaired to a spacious open area in the city, and with a loud voice proclaiming a dreadful sacrifice, rushed upon each other's weapons with so much fury and violence, that before the amazed troops could succeed in disarming them, numbers had already perished. There was one man whose intrepid fierceness was more cool and deliberate. He placed himself directly before the door of the *durbar*[36], surrounded by his family, which consisted of two younger brothers and a beautiful sister, all under eighteen years of age. Here he first stabbed the virgin to the heart, then one of his brothers; but before he could consummate the sacrifice of the second brother, his fratricidal purpose was arrested. He was afterwards heard to boast that he had a few months before sacrificed his father in the same glorious cause. A Brahminical sect, who claimed

[36] The court, the hall of audience: a levee.

an equal exemption, and equally in vain, signalized their villany by purchasing for immolation two aged matrons, whom they murdered in the public market-place [37].

This intrepidity and contempt of death in the Bhâts, which would be heroism if well directed, is seldom exerted for the good of mankind. "The advantage," says Colonel Tod, "which might result to the state from the respect paid to them is neutralized by their avarice, and constant evasion of the payment of all established duties. A memorable example of this occurred, during the reign of Umrah the First, with the ancestor of that Paimah, whose feud with Shama has been already described. The Rana would not submit to the insolent demands of the Bhâts, when they had recourse to one of the most sanguinary sacrifices ever recorded: collecting the elder portion of their community, men, women, and youths of both sexes, they made a sacrifice to the number of eighty souls with their daggers, in the court of the palace. The blood of the victims was on the Rana's head. It was a species of excommunication, which would have unsettled a weaker reason; for the Rajpoot might repose after the murder of a Brahmin, but that of the prophetic *Vates* would rise against him, both here and hereafter. For once they encountered a mind too strong to be shaken: Umra banished the whole fraternity of Bhamunia Bhâts from his dominions, and the town of Bhamuni reverted to the fisc. The edict remained uncancelled until these days, when amongst the industrious of all classes, whom the proclamations brought once more to Mewar, came Paimah and his brethren. Although tradition had preserved the causes of their exile, it had made no alteration in their sentiments and opinions, and the dagger was always at hand to be

[37] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 89, 93.

sheathed in their own flesh, whenever provocation called it from the girdle. Paimah beset the Rana in all his rides, demanding a reduction, or rather abolition of duties for his *tanda*; and at length he took up a position on the terrace fronting the 'balcony of the sun,' threatening a *chandi*, for such is the term applied to this suicidal revenge. The Rana, who had not the nerve of his ancestor, sent to me to beseech my interference: with his messenger, one from me returned to invite the Bhâts to a settlement. They came, as fine, robust, intrepid a set as I ever saw. We soon came to issue: I urged that duties must be paid by all who chose to frequent the passes of Mewar, and that they would get nothing by their present silly mode of endeavouring to obtain remission; that if they would give a written agreement to abide by the scale of duties laid down, they should receive exemption for five hundred out of the forty thousand bullocks of their tanda, and be reinducted into Bhamuni; if not there were daggers (showing them some on the table), and they might begin as soon as they pleased. I added that, in addition to Rana Umrah's penalty of banishment, I would recommend confiscation of their entire caravan. Paimah was no fool: he accepted Bhamuni, and the exemption for five hundred; and that day received his gold bracelets and clothes of investiture from the Rana [38]."

From the sacred *Vates* [39] of India, who, in modern times, are greatly fallen from their "high estate," let us pass to a very different description of men—the jugglers and serpent-charmers. In their treatment

[38] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 703, 704.

[39] There are in India three sorts of bards: the *Mâgadhas*, or historians; the *Sûtas*, or genealogists; and the *Bandis*, or court-minstrels, whose duty, in old times, it was to salute early in the morning the king, or chief, wishing him long life and prosperity.

of these vagabonds mankind exhibit a remarkable degree of injustice. Like the French before the Revolution, who crowded the theatres, and applauded with shouts and transport the performances of men, to whom, when dead, they refused Christian burial, the vulgar flock round the juggler, admire his feats, encourage him by rewards to persevere in his course of life, while, at the same time, they vilify his calling, and almost class him with felons. The Hindoos are eminently absurd in this respect. Nowhere are mountebanks, buffoons, posture-makers, tumblers, dancers, &c. more encouraged, and nowhere, perhaps, on earth, are they regarded by their patrons with more scorn and contempt. Yet the same ignorance and vacancy of mind which generates a taste for their exhibitions, likewise inspires a secret dread of the exhibitors, who are supposed to be expert magicians, skilled in all occult and necromantic arts, and disposed to inflict evil as well as to amuse.

That the Psylli of antiquity possessed some secret mode of fascinating serpents, which has passed down to their successors of the present day, both in Egypt and India, there seems to be no reasonable doubt. When it shall have been discovered, the whole process may possibly be found to have been extremely simple; but hitherto it is unknown; and they who love to deny the existence of all knowledge which they do not possess, rather turn the whole matter into ridicule than labour to explain it. We are told by the Abbé Dubois, that the Indian Psylli perform various tricks with serpents, which, though apparently terrible, are not very dangerous, as they always take the precaution to deprive them of their fangs, and to extract the vesicle in which the venom is contained; that they are, however, believed to have the power of charming those dangerous reptiles, and of commanding them to approach and surrender themselves at

the sound of the flute; that the same art was professed in other ancient nations, as appears from the following passage of Scripture: "Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of the charmers, charming never so wisely[40]:" and this other: "For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed[41]." But all this does not convince the abbé. "Without dwelling," says he, "on the literal accuracy of this striking passage of Holy Writ, I may confidently assert that the skill which the *pretenders to enchantment*, in India, claim in this particular, is rank imposture. The trick is, to put a snake, which they had tamed, and accustomed to their music, into some remote place, and they manage it so, that in appearing to go casually in that direction, and beginning to play, the snake comes forward at the accustomed sound. When they enter into an agreement with any simpleton, who fancies that his house is infested with serpents, a notion which they sometimes contrive to infuse into his brain, they artfully introduce into some crevice of the house one of their tame snakes, which comes up to its master as soon as it hears its flute. The potent enchanter instantly whips it up into his pannier, takes his fee, and gravely presents himself at the next house, to renew his offers of assistance to similar dupes[42]."

Rogues there are in every country, and their very

[40] Psalms, lviii. ver. 4, 5. [41] Jeremiah, ch. viii. ver. 17.

[42] Description of the People of India, p. 469, 470. Denon, equally incredulous with Dubois, gives a whimsical description of the performance of the Psylli, whose secret, he tells us, he might easily have discovered. Voyage en Egypte, p. 70—72. Hasselquist, however, a more sober and curious observer, discovered something beyond vulgar deception in their power over serpents. Lives of celebrated Travellers, vol. ii.

existence implies that there are also dupes; but this well authenticated fact by no means explains the numerous curious relations respecting serpent-charming, which are too well established to admit of doubt. The snakes usually selected by the musicians, whose profession it is to exhibit their power over these reptiles, are of the species known in Europe by the name of *cobra de capello*, or "hooded snake;" the most deadly of all the serpent brood. They are carried about in baskets. The exhibitors, who, like those little Savoyards with hand-organ and monkey, who are found in almost every country in Europe, earn a subsistence by the feats of their serpents, play a few simple notes on the flute, with which the animals appear to be vehemently delighted. As the music proceeds they keep time, by a graceful motion of the head, rising in spiry volumes from the ground, and following the notes they love with gentle curves, like the undulations of a swan's neck. With the cessation of the music they relapse into a sort of lethargy, and appear motionless; but must immediately be covered up in the basket, to prevent their springing upon the spectators. Forbes, who was really a curious observer, relates a fatal accident of this kind. He one day devoted an hour to the painting of a fine *cobra de capello*, which was kept dancing during the whole time upon a table. Not doubting that, according to the notions of the Abbé Dubois, its venomous fangs had been previously extracted, he frequently ventured to handle it, while admiring the beauty of its spots, and more particularly the spectacles on the hood. Next day his Mohammedan servant, going to the bazaar, observed the same musician amusing a number of simple country people with his dancing snakes. As was usual on such occasions, they formed a circle around him, and sat down on the ground; suddenly, the tremendous reptile, irritated either at the music

stopping too abruptly, or from some other unknown cause, darted among the spectators, and fastening on the throat of a young woman, inflicted a wound, of which she died in agony in half an hour. The same musicians who exhibit these performances, likewise charm all kinds of serpents, even the vast *boa*, from houses and gardens, where they lie in wait to spring upon the inmates [43].

With the same class of people we must rank the jugglers, story-tellers, and performers of farces. The last-mentioned vagabonds are a remarkable caste. They exactly resemble those itinerant players in Greece, who, according to the Doric argument preserved by Aristotle, were termed *Comedians*, from their wandering about the *Komai*, or "villages," before they were tolerated in the city. The *Fescennine* verses and *Atellan* farces of ancient Italy, of which we have an interesting account in Livy [44], resembled still more, perhaps, the pieces of our Hindoo performers. For the comedies or farces which they exhibit, agreeing with Aristotle's definition, are an imitation of "low characters," and may be supposed at least to equal in coarse indecency the dialogues of the old Tuscan actors. To these exhibitions are added puppet-shows, equally obscene; but which are suited to the taste of the gross multitude, for whom decorum, elegance, and the beauty of virtuous habits would have no charms [45].

Among the establishments of oriental princes a number of professed story-tellers are always found; but they are not confined within the walls of palaces. In the coffee-houses, in the courts of the caravansaries, in the streets, in fact, wherever a knot of people are collected together for the purpose of amusement, the story-teller generally makes one of

[43] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. 43, 44; vol. ii. p. 387.
[44] Liv. lib. vii. c. 2. [45] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 470.

the party. Even in the desert camp, when the warlike shepherds, returned from some desperate foray, or halting by some date-grove or fountain after a long march, sit down at their tent-doors in the evening, the talents of the story-teller are put in requisition. In the East, professed story-tellers, says Richardson, are of ancient date: even at this day men of rank have usually one or more, male or female, among their attendants, who amuse them and their women, when melancholy, vexed, or indisposed; and they are generally employed to lull them to sleep. Many of their tales are highly amusing, especially those of Persian origin, or such as have been written on the same plan.' They were thought so dangerous by Mohammed, that he expressly prohibited them in the Koran [46].

With us it would be thought an awkward way of complimenting an author to tell him that his fictions had blessed us with a sound sleep, though, perhaps, this might sometimes be said with great truth; but they manage these things differently in the East, where the charms of a drowsy style, seconded by a still more drowsy recitation, by which "the hearer's threatened, not in vain, with sleep," are universally held in high estimation. On this subject Forbes relates a pleasant anecdote. "One of my friends, a former resident at Cambay, and a favourite of the Nawab, being ill," says he, "with a fever, which banished sleep and baffled the power of medicine, the Nawab sent him two female story-tellers of respectable Mogul families, but neither young nor handsome. Placing themselves on each side of his pillow, one of them in a monotonous tone commenced a tale, which, in due time, had a soporiferous effect: the patient enjoyed a slumber to which he had long been unaccustomed;

[46] Richardson on the Languages, Literature, and Manners of Eastern Nations, p. 69.

when he awoke, the story was renewed exactly where it had left off. Thus these venerable dames relieved each other, day and night, until, by a charm more efficacious than the juice of poppies, they wrought a cure[47]."

Of the dexterity of the Indian jugglers numerous travellers speak with astonishment. Fryer makes mention of women who, with their hands and feet, kept nine gilded balls in play for a considerable length of time, without suffering one to fall to the ground. "I saw a man," says he, "who swallowed a chain, such as our jacks have, and made it clink in his stomach; but on pulling it out, it was not so pleasant to the ladies, for whose diversion it was brought. I was promised also to see a fellow cast up his bowels by his mouth, stomach and all, showing them to the beholders, but this we excused. In his stead was brought another, who, by suction or drawing of his breath, so contracted his lower belly that it had nothing left to support it, but fell flat to his loins, the midriff being forced into the thorax, and the muscles of the abdomen as clearly marked out by the stiff tendons of the linea alba, as by the most accurate dissection could be made apparent; he moving each row, like living columns, by turns." Some of these exhibitions are sufficiently disgusting; others endanger the lives of the performers. Among the latter must be classed the swallowing of a sword; a feat which one of these jugglers achieved in England, at the expense of his life. The most accurate description which has yet been given of this dangerous experiment is that of Mr. Johnson, a surgeon in the navy, who observes that, having been visited by one of these conjurers, he determined properly to examine his mode of operation. The sword was from twenty-two to twenty-six inches in length,

[47] Oriental Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 182, 183.

about an inch in breadth, and about one-fifth of an inch in thickness. The point and edges were blunt; the weapon was of steel or iron, and a little bright. "Having satisfied myself with respect to the sword," says Mr. Johnson, "by attempting to bend it, and by striking it against a stone, I firmly grasped it by the handle, and ordered him to proceed. He first took a small phial of oil, and with one of his fingers rubbed a little of it over the surface of the instrument; then, stretching up his neck as much as possible, and bending himself a little backwards, he introduced the point of it into his mouth, and pushed it gently down his throat, until my hand, which was on the handle, came in contact with his lips. He then made a sign to me with one of his hands, to feel the point of the instrument between his breast and navel; which I could plainly do, by bending him a little more backwards, and pressing my fingers on his stomach, he being a very thin and lean fellow. On letting go the handle of the sword, he instantly fixed on it a little machine that spun round, and disengaged a small fire-work, which, encircling his head with a blue flame, gave him, as he sat, a truly diabolical appearance. On withdrawing the instrument, several parts of its surface were covered with blood, which showed that he was still obliged to use a degree of violence in the introduction." Anquetil du Perron beheld, at Sadras, a young woman mount a bamboo pole, thirty feet high, with an iron point at the top; and, lying down on the summit on the navel, spin round with fearful velocity[48].

But by far the most remarkable feat ever performed by these mountebanks, is that beheld by Tavernier, at Baroche, in Guzerat. Their first performance "was to make the chains with which their bodies were encircled red-hot, by means of an immense fire which they

[48] Zendavesta, Disc. Prélim. tom. i. p. 110.

had kindled; and the touch of these they bore without shrinking, or seeming to feel any thing beyond a slight inconvenience. They next took a small piece of wood, and having planted it in the earth, demanded of one of the bystanders what fruit they should cause it to produce. The company replied that they wished to see *mangoes*. One of the jugglers then wrapped himself in a sheet, and crouched down to the earth several times in succession. Tavernier, whom all this *diablerie* delighted exceedingly, ascended to the window of an upper chamber for the purpose of beholding more distinctly the whole proceedings of the magician; and through a rent in the sheet saw him cut himself under the arms with a razor, and rub the piece of wood with his blood. Every time he rose from his crouching posture the bit of wood grew visibly; and at the third time branches and buds sprang out. The tree, which had now attained the height of five or six feet, was next covered with leaves, and then with flowers. At this instant, an English clergyman arrived (the performance taking place at the house of one of our countrymen); and, perceiving in what practices the jugglers were engaged, commanded them instantly to desist; threatening the whole of the Europeans present with exclusion from the holy communion if they persisted in encouraging the diabolical arts of sorcerers and magicians. The zeal of this hot-headed son of the church put a stop to the exhibition, and prevented our traveller from beholding the crowning miracle[49]."

The class of persons who next present themselves for description, though unhappily tarnished with immoral stains, awaken more agreeable ideas. These are the celebrated *Bayaderes*, or dancing-girls, beheld with astonishment by the earlier traveller, but since disparaged and neglected. As objects of curiosity,

[49] Lives of celebrated Travellers, vol. i. p. 183, 184.

however, they are not destitute of interest. Like the same caste of females in ancient Greece, where their performances were employed to enliven banquets and festivities at private houses, the Bayaderes, when not devoted from their birth to this profession, are commonly selected for their great personal beauty, their sparkling vivacity of temper, the elegant contour of their limbs, the lightness of their form, and the ease and gracefulness of their movements. The style of dancing which prevailed among the female performers of antiquity, as far as we can judge by description, and the pictured representations found upon gems and vases, was of a very different character from that in which the Bayaderes of India delight[50]. Regulated by a superior music, it expressed by a variety of movements, light, rapid, beautiful, all the more delicate and powerful emotions of the soul. Their attitudes, their gestures were impassioned; but with this passion there was mingled I know not what of sentiment, of enthusiasm, of poetical exaltation, and delicacy, which communicated to the whole scene an air of classical beauty. In the East all this is reversed. There, the acknowledged object in view being to inflame the passions, they proceed directly, and by the most obvious means, to this end. The whole drama of love is represented. The dancer, discarding, as unworthy of her art, the husk of passion, commences with a series of attitudes and gestures, sometimes highly indelicate, and always too gross to be pleasing to a refined taste. She is the very personification of wanton delight, and as she follows with impassioned eagerness the inflaming march of the music, suiting her indecorous postures to the suggestions of the notes, her whole frame quivers with desire, her eyes sparkle, her voice falters, and

[50] See the description of the dance representing Bacchus and Ariadne, in the last chapter of Xenophon's Symposium.

she exhibits every symptom of intense passion[51]. This description applies more particularly to those dances which take place before the idols, either within the precincts of the temple, or during the festivals annually celebrated in honour of the gods.

The dancing-girls who perform at private entertainments adapt their movements to the taste and character of those before whom they exhibit. Here, as in public, they are accompanied by musicians playing on instruments resembling the violin and guitar. "Their dances require great attention, from the dancer's feet being hung with small bells, which act in concert with the music. Two girls usually perform at the same time; their steps are not so mazy or active as ours, but much more interesting; as the song, the music, and the motions of the dance combine to express love, hope, jealousy, despair, and the passions so well known to lovers, and very easy to be understood by those who are ignorant of other languages. The Indians are extremely fond of this entertainment, and lavish large sums on their favourites[52]." An eastern traveller, describing the mode in

[51] Dubois, Description, &c. of the People of India, p. 401.

[52] Bishop Heber, Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 320. See also vol. i. p. 47; vol. iii. p. 19, 141, 219. In almost every part of the East the passion for dancing-girls prevails. Crawfurd, in his account of a late embassy to Ava, observes that at Henzada, on their way to the capital, the mission were entertained with an exhibition of this kind. The female dancers, who made but little use of their feet, expressing the ideas they meant to convey by the motions of their body and hands, were not more indecent than those of Hindoostan, p. 20, 21. Volney, in his concise masterly manner, describes to the life the *Almé*, or dancing-girls, of Egypt, vol. ii. p. 440, 442. And Swinburne, with equal ability and boldness, has sketched the *Fandango* and *Mandingo*, sometimes performed by Spanish ladies, which in wantonness nowise fall short of the dances of *Almé* or *Bayaderes*. Travels in Spain. See also, in Langle, Voy. en Esp. i. 144, the description of the *Calenda*.

which a Mohammedan of rank spends his evenings within the recesses of his harem, conveys an exact idea of what passes in the zenana of a Hindoo. Here, says he, secluded from the world, the voluptuous Musulman, laying aside the grandeurs of the day, with the irritation of mind which accompanies ambition, abandons himself to soft repose; and, in the stillness of a starry night, acquires that serenity of mind which lulls the soul into pleasing complacency; forming a delightful contrast to the stormy passions of an agitated day. Negligently stretched upon his couch, he listens to the melodious song, and contemplates the graceful forms of the surrounding dancers, amid the odoriferous smoke of incense.

The observation of Plato, that the influence of soil and climate affects not the body only but also the soul, is founded in nature and experience. And no where is its truth more apparent than in the East. For there the balmy air, impregnated with natural perfume, unites with the relaxing force of the sun in inspiring a keen relish for the pleasures of the senses; while by some secret instinct, elsewhere more faintly felt, the minds of men, in other things rude and untutored, discover the most apt and powerful means of heightening the enjoyments adapted to their tastes.

Upon the materials of oriental entertainments it is unnecessary to insist in this place, as we have elsewhere fully treated of this matter; but, while describing the scene where the luxurious Bayaderes most frequently display their charms, it may not be improper to bestow a hasty word on certain other accessaries. During the banquet the attendants frequently bring in fruits, pistachio-nuts, and salted almonds, to improve the flavour of the coffee and sherbets, made from the juice of falsee, lemmes, and different fruits, presented in profusion and

variety. Others stand near with punkahs and chowries, with which they keep up a perpetual vibration in the air, and drive away insects. The punkahs are a kind of fans; and the chowries a sort of long pendent brush, composed of different materials; sometimes of peacock's feathers, or the beautiful plumage of the bird of paradise. Others are formed of kusa-grass, or the leaves of the palmyra tree. But by far the most elegant are those formed from the tail of the cow of Tartary. The beauty of the chowry, or châmara, depends upon the whiteness, silkiness, and length of the hair, which, remaining on the stump of the tail, is set in a handle of gold, silver, or enamel, sometimes roughly incrusted with jewels. The saloon is covered with rich carpets, cushions, and pillows, of various kinds, illuminated at night from cut-glass chandeliers, and ornamented with Persian, or other paintings, representing the youthful beauties of the East, amid a profusion of fruit, flowers, ices, and perfumes. This apartment, usually supported by pillars, opens on every side into a garden, in which, amid roses, jasmins, tulips, pomegranates, and other beautiful plants, numerous diminutive fountains play with delightful effect. "The size of these gardens does not admit much variety in the walks and shrubberies; choice trees and shrubs border a narrow canal between the pavilions, adorned with a number of small fountains; the centre of the canal expands round an octagonal marble temple of a singular construction; each perforated column contains a leaden pipe, which conveys water to the roof of the temple, where, from eight fountains round the dome, it falls over the projecting architrave on screens of sweet-scented kusa-grass, and gently trickling through the matted verdure renders the internal atmosphere delightful. Imagination can hardly conceive a more luxurious enjoyment in the torrid zone than to repose in a temple of

fountains, lulled by the notes of nightingales in the surrounding groves."

Such are the scenes where the performances of the Bayaderes [53] are enjoyed both by Musulman and Hindoo. Their songs are often melodious, and glowing with the rich imagery of the East. Few specimens, however, of these compositions have reached Europe, and in such as we have seen the introduction of Moslem names betrays the influence of a foreign nation. Still, as examples of what thrills to the heart of an Asiatic in the midst of his luxuriant tropical groves and gardens, the compositions which follow cannot fail to be interesting. "When, Oh my beloved! wilt thou return? Delight of my heart and treasure of my soul, Oh! when wilt thou appear to bless thy Roxana? In vain do I await thy approach: thou comest not to thy love; mine eyelids are wear in watching for thy footsteps. The couch of m beloved is decked with garlands of mogrees, over shadowed by a canopy of jessamin. I have strewe it with the sweet dust of *Keurah*, and perfumed i with attar of roses: I am scented with the oils o Lahore, and tinged with the blossoms of Hinna; haste then, my beloved, to thine handmaid, gladden he heart by thy presence." There is in the second more depth of passion, earnestness, energy. The heart, wrung by intense regret, seems to pour forth a torrent of impassioned endearment, over which a thousand brilliant recollections sparkle like flakes of foam upon a mountain stream. "Abdallah! lamp of my life and possessor of my heart; my first, my only love! In vain do I call upon thee, thou art afar off; thou hearest not the voice of thy Selima, once the most favoured of thy slaves. Abdallah, my king! my love! thou hast decked me with diamonds of

[53] The word Bayadere is a corruption of the Portuguese *Bailadeira*, "a female dancer."

Bayaderes, or Dancing Girls.

Golconda, and covered me with pearls of Ormuz: but what are diamonds and pearls to her that is forsaken? The jewel most prized by thy Selima is no longer her own; give me thy heart, my beloved, restore it to its first possessor. The shawls of Cashmere and the silks of Iran, presented by my lord, have no longer any charms for thy Selima; thy palace, thy baths, thy gardens delight me no more; take them again; what are they all, compared with the heart of my Abdallah? Oh, give me thy heart, my beloved! restore it to its first possessor. The gardens and groves, once the fond retreat of thy Selima, afford me no pleasure; the mango and pomegranate tempt me in vain! The fragrance of champaks and odour of spices I no longer enjoy; my damsels delight me no more, and music ceases to charm. Return, oh my lord, to thine handmaid, restore her thy heart, and every pleasure will accompany it! Oh, give thy heart to thy Selima! restore it to its first possessor[54]."

Respecting the dress and appearance of the dancing-girls, there is a remarkable discrepancy between the descriptions of different travellers, arising, no doubt, from accidental variations in their form and costume. Bishop Heber, speaking of the girls of northern India, observes, that "their dresses were rich; but that there was such an enormous quantity of scarlet cloth petticoats and trousers, so many shawls wrapped round their waists, and such multifarious skirts peeping out below each other, that their figures were quite hidden, and the whole effect was that of a number of Dutch dolls, though the face of two or three out of the number were pretty[55]." Some

[54] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 81, 203, 254; vol. iii. p. 81, 176, 463. Buchanan, Journey through the Mysore, vol. i. p. 12, 307; vol. ii. p. 72, 266, 285; vol. iii. p. 65, 95, 174.

[55] Narrative of a Journey, &c vol. ii. p. 320.

On the other hand, the Abbé Dubois, describing the Bayaderes of the south, says, "perfumes, elegant and attractive attire, particularly of the head, sweet-scented flowers intertwined with exquisite art about their beautiful hair, multitudes of ornamental trinkets, adapted with infinite taste to the different parts of the body, a graceful carriage and measured step, indicating luxurious delight; such are the allurements and the charms which these enchanting sirens display to accomplish their seductive designs[56]." And Mr. Cruso, who witnessed their performances at Khânpoor, speaks of a set of young dancing-girls from Cashmere, of such surpassing beauty, grace, and elegant accomplishments, that he despaired of being able to convey by words any tolerable idea of them[57].

The origin of dancing-girls, as of almost every other immoral custom in India, is to be traced to superstition. "There are in India public women, called *women of the idol*, and the origin of this custom is as follows: when a woman has made a vow for the purpose of having children, if she brings into the world a pretty daughter, she carries to *Bod* (Buddha), —so they call the idol which they adore,—and leaves it with him[58]." The custom still prevails in the Dekkan, where the girls thus devoted are called *Dêvadâsi*, or "slaves of the god." It has been conjectured, from the circumstance of this custom being unknown in other parts of India, that the Brahmins found it established by the ancient religion of the country, and retained it as equally agreeable to themselves and their new disciples[59]. In fact, it is by no means uncommon, says Dubois, to hear of pregnant

[56] Description, &c. of the People of India, p. 402; Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 166, 282.

[57] Oriental Memoirs, vol. iv. p. 81.

[58] Anciennes Relations de l'Inde et de le Chine, &c. p. 109.

[59] Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 166, 167.

Women making a vow, with the consent of their husbands, to devote the child, if it should turn out a girl, to the service of the pagoda. And in doing so, they imagine they are performing a meritorious service. The infamous life to which the daughter is destined brings no disgrace on the family [60].

One piece of gallantry, of which we may be sure the Bayaderes are more frequently the object than any other women, is sufficiently remarkable: the young Hindoo females of Benares, and other places, wear very thin plates or rather leaves of gold, called *ticas*, slightly fixed, by way of ornament, between their eyebrows. When these ladies pass through the street, it is not uncommon for the young men, who amuse themselves with training *bayas*, a species of Indian bird, to give them a sign which they understand, and send them to pluck the ornaments of gold from the foreheads of their mistresses, which they bring in triumph to the lovers [61].

[60] Description, &c. of the People of India, p. 402.

[61] At'har Ali Khan of Delhi; Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 110. The account of the *baya* and its nest, in the Asiatic Researches, is highly curious and interesting. It is rather larger than a sparrow, with yellow brown plumage, a yellowish head and feet, a light-coloured breast, and a conic beak, very thick in proportion to its body. It is astonishingly sensible, faithful, and docile, never voluntarily deserting the place where his young were hatched; nowise averse, like most other birds, to the society of mankind; and easily taught to perch on the hand of his master. In a state of nature he generally builds his nest on the highest tree that he can find, especially on the palmyra, or on the Indian fig-tree; and he prefers that which happens to overhang a wall or a rivulet: he makes it of grass, which he weaves like a cloth, and shapes like a large bottle, suspending it by the branches, but so as to rock with the wind; and [illegible] it with its entrance downwards, to secure it from birds [illegible] His nest usually consists of two or three chambers; and it is the popular belief that he lights them with fire-flies, which he catches at night, and confines with moist clay, or with cow-dung: that such flies are often found in his nest, where

pieces of cow-dung are also stuck, is indubitable; but, as their light would be of little use to him, it seems probable that he only feeds on them. It is an attested fact, that, if a ring be dropped into a deep well, and a signal given to him, he will fly down with amazing celerity, catch the ring before it touches the water, and bring it up to his master with apparent exultation. See also the curious descriptions of Fryer and Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 48, 49, ii. 280.

Chapter XI.

WILD TRIBES OF INDIA.

KHASYA—GARROWS—MUGHS, KOOKIES, LUNCTAS—PUHARRIES—KHATTIES—KHOJIES—BHILLS—MAIRS, &c.

In our account of those portions of the population of India which have adopted the religion and civil institutions of the Brahmins, allusions have occasionally been made to certain other tribes of men, who, either inspired with indomitable fierceness by their rude manner of living in forests or among the solitudes of mountains, or detesting the tyranny which has crushed out the spirit of their brethren, still maintain a barbarous independence in their rocks and fastnesses, preferring poverty, wretchedness, and a constant struggle against the buffetings and inclemency of the seasons before a tame submission to despotism. However little they may resemble us, therefore, under any other point of view, this hatred of tyranny which they possess in common with ourselves, renders them an object of interest to us. For this reason we shall for a moment turn aside from the contemplation of the enslaved and priest-ridden Hindoo, to refresh our minds with a view of these intrepid children of the forest, who doubtless represent the aboriginal population of Hindoostan.

The Hindoos, who have adopted the Brahminical institutions, hold these wandering tribes in extreme [illegible]mpt. Men in constant motion, with bodies and [illegible] indurated by toil and the habit of facing danger, with appetites, under many circumstances made ravenous by keen mountain air, by fatigue, and by

privation, are not to be confined to the regimen of an ascetic legislator. Every day they must almost necessarily infringe the rules of caste. Their habits, matched against the ordinances of the priests, would prove invincible. They are, therefore, abhorred by the Brahmins, who, in their abusive manner and peculiar aptitude for invective, lavish on them every opprobrious epithet which affected scorn and real vehement hatred can suggest. This infliction the wild tribes bear, however, with imperturbable equanimity. But if, as sometimes comes to pass, a bearer of the staff and wallet happens to fall into their power, the accumulated vengeance of centuries is poured upon his head; he is sacrificed on the altars of the destructive spirits.

But these numerous tribes, scattered over the face of the country at vast distances from each other, are each distinguished by peculiar customs, manners, and opinions, and may be regarded as so many smaller nations. Some have in process of time adopted comparatively peaceful habits. Such, for example, are the *Khasya*, or "inhabitants of Kemaoon, who yearly come down to the plain, after the unwholesome time is over, to graze their cattle and cultivate the best and driest spots of the forest with barley and wheat, which they reap and carry back with them before April is far advanced, when they return to reap the similar, but somewhat later crops, which they had sown before they left their own country." On these occasions they likewise dispose of their honey, or other productions of the hills, in exchange for such luxuries as the civilized parts of Hindoostan only can supply. They are dark and meagre, but strong and well-formed. They of a loftier stature than the generality of mountaineers. Their principal garment is a long black blanket; few have arms; and their dwelling i

chiefly under tents. Their character is peaceable and honest. The Khasya women have handsome features, but are sun-burnt and toil-worn, and their ears and noses are deformed by weighty metal rings, worn as ornaments. They have also anklets and bracelets of silver. In other respects they resemble the men, both in dress and appearance. They are exceedingly industrious. In every part of their country, where the declivity of the hills will admit a plough or a spade, are seen little plots of ground, sometimes not more than four feet wide, and ten or twelve feet long, in a high state of cultivation. Some of these are ranged in little terraces, one above another, supported by walls of loose stones, as in the hilly vine districts of Burgundy. "Bhimt'hal, in the Khasya country, is a very beautiful place. It is a little mountain valley, surrounded on three sides by woody hills, and on the fourth by a tract of green meadow, with a fine lake of clear water. A small and very rude pagoda of grey stone, with a coarse slate roof, under some fine peopul trees, looked like a little church; and the whole scene, except that the hills were higher, so strongly reminded me of Wales, that I felt my heart beat as I entered it[1]."

The *Garrows*, a number of wild tribes, who formerly occupied an extensive region lying between the north-eastern frontier of Bengal and the kingdom of Asam, are at present confined within much narrower limits. Their country is a confused assemblage of mountains and narrow valleys, watered by numerous small streams. Barren spaces and prodigious masses of naked rock are said to occupy the centre of the country hitherto unexplored. In general the mountains are clothed with magnificent forests, among which are found an infinite variety of curious and ornamental plants. Here the best *eagle-wood*

[1] Heber's Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 179, 188.

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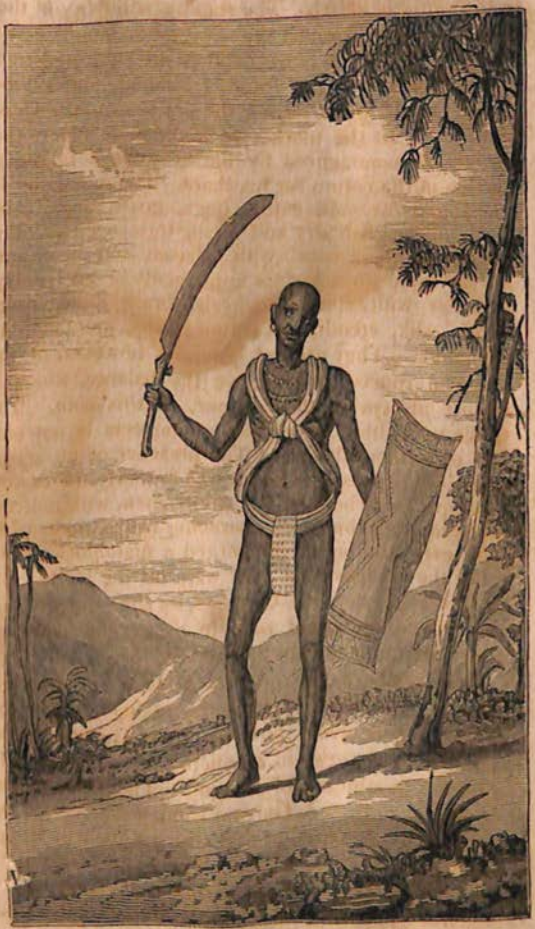
in the world is found. The staple commodity of the country is cotton, which the savage inhabitants carry into Bengal, where, however, they are subjected to a constant succession of fraud, falsehood, and extortion. Once a week, during the dry season, the Garrows repair to the market of Rungpoor. Here the business is commenced by the zemindar's taking a portion of the cotton for his share. The remainder is exchanged for salt, cattle, hogs, goats, dogs, cats, fowls, ducks, fish dry and fresh, tortoises, rice, and extract of sugar-cane, with tobacco and betel-nut. At the same time, certain implements of husbandry, together with spinning-wheels, brass ware, ornaments, silk, erendi, and cotton cloths, are taken in exchange. They are not ignorant, however, of the value of rupees, and receive the balance, which is almost always in their favour, in this coin. The traffic with these ferocious mountaineers is not carried on without danger. The presence of an armed force is indispensable; and it was formerly the custom to keep a large body of matchlock-men, with matches ready lighted, continually parading round the market, who ever and anon discharged a matchlock, to remind the savages that they were on the alert. But for this precaution the Garrows, on the slightest misunderstanding, would rush to arms, and massacre every merchant within their reach.

The northern Garrows are a short but muscular people, in features strongly resembling the Chinese. Among their chiefs, however, there are some handsome men, superior in manners and vivacity to the adjacent zemindars of Bengal. They are of great bodily strength. A Garrow woman will carry over the hills a load equal to that which a man in Bengal could carry over the plains. Their appetite is highly tolerant of variety. Besides the animals usually eaten, they devour cats, dogs, frogs, and snakes.



Native of the Garrow Hills in his War dress.

Milk, in every form whatever, they execrate and abhor, calling it diseased matter. Of the flesh of puppies they are exceedingly fond, more especially when cooked after their savage fashion. This is as follows: the dog is first made to eat as large a quantity as possible of rice; he is then seized, and his four legs having been tied together, is thrown alive upon the fire. When roasted, the belly is ripped up, and the rice divided in equal shares among the party. This is regarded as a great delicacy. When a quarrel arises between two Garrows, the weaker, to avoid the fury of his antagonist, flies to some distant mountain. But from this moment the feud becomes desperate; each of them now plants a certain tree, and binds himself by a solemn vow to devour the head of his enemy with the juice of its fruit. Should an individual, as sometimes happens, fail to accomplish this vow during his own lifetime, the feud descends as an heir-loom to his children. But the day of vengeance at length arrives. The antagonists encounter, and the weaker, or least fortunate, bites the dust. The victor then cuts off his head; and, having with this ingredient and the fruit of the before-mentioned tree made a palatable soup, invites all his friends to a banquet, in which this soup is the principal dish. After this feast the tree is cut down, the feud being ended.

When the victory has been obtained over any of of their lowland neighbours, the proceedings are somewhat different. Numbers collect round the reeking heads, which are borne towards the hills in triumph, having been scooped out and filled with liquor and food, while the savage conquerors move along in the procession with dances and songs of rejoicing. The skulls are then buried in the earth. When the flesh is supposed to have fallen off, they are exhumed, cleansed, and suspended as trophies in

the houses of the victors. Thus prepared, they become the circulating medium of the country; but, as they are very highly valued, can only be used in large payments[2]. The bodies and bones of their own dead are burned to ashes, lest by any accident the skull of a Garrow should be passed off for that of a Bengalese. The skulls are valued in proportion to the rank of the persons to whom they belonged. In 1815 the skull of a Hindoo zemindar was valued at one thousand rupees; that of a Talook'hdar at five hundred; while a mere peasant's skull would not pass for more than ten or twelve rupees. The upper classes in Bengal would, perhaps, forgive the Garrows, were they somewhat less punctilious in their respect for the distinctions of rank.

In each clan, or tribe, there is a chief whose principal office is the terminating of domestic feuds. Falsehood is punished with death. Thieving and dishonesty are little known; but, as every man constantly wears a sword, murder is common. Drunkenness, to which they are vehemently addicted, frequently causes the shedding of blood. They believe in the transmigration of the soul, and have some obscure notions of the Deity, but possess neither temples nor images. Before each house a dry bamboo with all its branches is fixed in the ground, and adorned with flowers and tufts of cotton thread; and before this they make their offerings. Some few have learned to read and write the Bengali; none have made this progress in their own language: even of

[2] Among the *Haraforas* of Borneo, and the ancient inhabitants of Sumatra, there is no other money but the skulls of their enemies. No person is permitted to marry until he has imbrued his hands in human blood; and the principal ornaments of their houses are human teeth and human skulls, out of which they drink like the Battas. Leyden on the Languages and Literature of the Indo-Chinese Nations; Asiatic Researches, vol. x. p. 217.

the art of weaving they were wholly ignorant until very recently.

The southern Garrows, who differ in many respects from the northern, are stout, well formed, laborious men. Their countenances are ill-boding. The nose, flat like a Kafferi, small brown or blue eyes, wrinkled forehead, beetling brows, large mouth, thick lips, and round face, bespeak neither humanity nor intelligence. Their complexion a light or deep brown. A narrow girdle, concealing the waist, constitutes the whole of their dress. Their hair is sometimes thrown back from the face, and fastened by a kind of brazen ornament in a manner which gives them a fierce wild air. Others cut it close, or tie it in a loose careless fashion on the crown. The chiefs wear a silk turban; a little bag suspended at their girdle contains their money; and a small net the apparatus for lighting their pipes. The women, short, squat, and masculine in features, are remarkable for their ugliness. Their dress, like that of the men, merely consists of a covering for the waist, all the other parts of the body being left exposed. They have some rude ornaments round their necks, and their ears are deformed by a multitude of rings, sometimes six inches in diameter. Like their brethren of the north they eat all kinds of food, even the blood of animals, which they bake over a slow fire in a hollow green bamboo until it nearly resembles the cane in colour. Most other kinds of animal food they devour almost raw. In drinking they indulge to excess, after the manner of barbarians; and even infants, as soon as they can swallow, have spirituous liquors poured into their mouths. During a scarcity of grain, they subsist on the pith of the *kobul*, a tree resembling the palmyra, which, when pounded, soaked in water, and boiled, is of a gelatinous substance, and when fresh tastes like sugar-cane. They have also a sort of yam, called *kutcher*, which is cultivated like the potato. The *chaungs*,

or houses of the Garrows, like those of certain Polynesian tribes, are raised several feet from the ground on piles. They are in length from thirty to one hundred and fifty feet, from ten to forty feet in breadth, and are roofed with thatch; or with mats and long grass. The props of the chaung consist of large *saul* timbers, and vary in number according to the size of the dwelling. Over these are placed horizontally large beams to support the roof, which are fastened together with cords, slips of cane, or grass. The sides of the dwelling are made with small hollow bamboos, cut open, flatted, and woven like a mat. The floor is of the same material. The house is divided into two apartments, of which one is left unfloored for the cattle. At the opposite end is an open platform, where the women sit and work. On a similar platform, open above, the children play. All the filth of the family descends through a small trap-door, and is cleared away by the hogs, who are their only scavengers. They are covered with bugs.

This division of the Garrow nation differs considerably from the former in character. Mild, honest, and faithful to their promise, they easily yield themselves up, on occasions of rejoicing, to the impulses of extravagant mirth. Men, women, and children drink to excess, and dance while they can stand. Their manner of dancing is as follows: twenty or thirty men standing behind one another in a row, hold each by the sides of their belts, and then go round in a circle, hopping first on one foot, then on the other, singing and keeping time with the music, which is animating, though harsh and inharmonious. The women likewise dance in rows, but hold out their hands, at the same time lowering one and raising the other, as the music beats, and occasionally turning round with great rapidity. The men also exhibit military exercises, like the barbarians described by Xenophon,

with sword and shield, which they use with grace and great activity. These drinking festivals continue during several days, after which they grow sober by degrees. In these violent fits of intoxication, quarrels and assassinations, so common among their brethren of the north, are said to be unknown.

The business of marriage is generally conducted, as with us, by the parties concerned; but if the parents on either side refuse their consent, the friends of the other party assemble, and beat them into compliance. A day is then fixed for the celebration of the nuptials. It being the custom for the bride to seek the bridegroom, all those who are invited assemble on the appointed day at her dwelling, where the usual round of drinking, dancing, and singing commences. The bride is then carried to the river and bathed, after which the whole company moves in procession, with wine, provisions, and music, towards the house of the bridegroom, who, on learning their approach, feigns to fly. He is quickly caught, however, and carried, like his mistress, to be bathed in the river. His parents now commence a kind of funereal howl, and attempt to detain him by force. When this mock resistance is over, the procession returns to the dwelling of the bride, where the ceremony is completed by the sacrifice of a cock and hen, and the usual debaucheries of a savage feast.

Their funeral ceremonies are still more remarkable: the dead are kept four days, after which they are placed in a small boat on the top of the pile, which is erected within six or eight yards of the house. The pyre is kindled by the nearest relation exactly at midnight, after which they feast, make merry, dance, sing, and get drunk. When the body has been consumed, the ashes are buried in the earth exactly where the pile was kindled, and a small thatched building, surrounded by a railing, is erected over the spot. Within this building a lamp is burned every

night for the space of a month or more; and the wearing apparel of the deceased is suspended on poles fixed up at each corner of the railing, which, after a certain time, are broken, and allowed to hang downwards until they fall to pieces. If the deceased be a person of rank, the funeral pile is decorated with cloth and flowers, and the head of a bullock, sacrificed on the occasion, is burned with the corpse. At the obsequies of an ordinary chieftain, the head of one of his slaves is cut off, and burned with him; but when a superior chieftain dies, a large body of his slaves sally forth from the hills, and having seized upon a Hindoo, cut off his head, and burn it with their chief. The graves of these chieftains are decorated with the images of numerous animals, and the railing is often adorned with fresh flowers.

Their religion is a modification of the Hindoo system, as they worship Mahâdêva, or Siva, with the sun and moon. To these divinities, the chief of whom is supposed to reside somewhere in the mountains, they sacrifice a bull, a goat, a hog, a cock, or a dog. An oath, among them, is taken upon a stone, which they first salute; then, with their hands joined and uplifted, their eyes steadfastly fixed on the hills, they call in the most solemn manner on Mahâdêva. On other occasions, when about to take an oath, they put a tiger's bone between their teeth; others hold a quantity of earth; others their weapons in their hands. Adultery, robbery, and murder are punished with death. Fines expiate all minor offences, and the money thus collected is spent in intoxicating liquor. On occasions of public deliberation they assemble in their war-dress, which consists of a long blue cloth, covering part of the back, and tied at the breast, where the four corners are made to meet, a shield, and a sword. They sit in a circle, with their swords fixed in the ground before them. Their resolutions, when they relate to war, are put

into immediate execution; but when their deliberations are concerning other matters, they terminate in feasting, dancing, singing, and drinking. In these councils the women enjoy an equal authority with the men. In illness they sacrifice to the deity. They are not wholly ignorant of the virtues of the medicinal plants which their mountains produce; but seem to have greater faith in charms and spells than in physic. One of their principal talismans is a tiger's nose, which is suspended round the neck of women in childbirth. A snake's skin is considered as a certain remedy for external pains. They practise inoculation. There exists among the Garrows an extraordinary species of madness, which they call "transformation into a tiger," the person afflicted with it roaming about like that animal, shunning all society. It is said that, on first being seized, persons tear their hair, and the rings from their ears, with such fury as to break the lobes. It rarely endures beyond a week or a fortnight. The Garrows attribute it to the force of some medicament applied to the forehead; but it is more probably caused by frequent intoxication. The patient resembles the *were-wolf* of Brittany, who roamed, in moody melancholy, through the dismal morasses and forests of that wild country[3].

Another wild tribe, found on the eastern frontiers of our Indian empire, are the *Kookies* or *Lunctas*, who dwell among the mountains north-east of the Chittagong province. As they rarely descend to the plains, except when visiting the markets to purchase provisions, their character and manners are but little known. They are, however, regarded as the most wild and savage of all the mountaineers of the eastern frontier. Short, active, muscular in form, they greatly

[3] Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 21—43; Hamilton, Description of India, vol. ii. p. 756—761.

exceed in vigour the inhabitants of the lower hills; their complexion, likewise, is darker; in features they resemble the natives of eastern Asia, having flat noses, small eyes, and broad round faces. According to their traditions, both they and the *Mughs* are the offspring of the same progenitor, who had two sons, by different mothers. The Mughs, they say, are the descendants of the eldest, and the Kookies of the youngest son. The mother of the latter having died during his infancy, he was neglected by his stepmother, who, clothing her own son, allowed him to go naked. Growing up in the same condition, he was denominated *Luncta*, or "the naked." A quarrel arising between the brothers upon their father's death, Luncta betook himself to the hills, where he passed the remainder of his days, on the very soil still inhabited by his descendants. Though the word *Lunctas* be applied to the whole tribe, it properly belongs to the males only, for the women wear a short apron, of their own manufacture, which descends from the loins to the middle of the thigh; and in severe weather both sexes throw a loose sheet over their bodies, to defend themselves against the inclemency of the seasons.

The Kookies, who are divided into a number of distinct tribes, totally independent of each other, are all hunters and warriors. They all, however, acknowledge more or less the authority of three different Rajahs, to whom the various tribes are attached, but whose power is very limited, except over their own immediate clans, where it is absolute. These Rajahs, who are hereditary, wear, by way of distinction, a small slip of black cloth round their loins, and have their hair brought forward and tied in a bunch, so as to overshadow their forehead; while their subjects wear their long hair hanging loose over their shoulders. The ladies also of the Rajah's family wear an apron

of black cloth, with a red border, which descends to the knee—a colour and fashion prohibited to the rest of the sex, black being the royal colour.

The Rajahs, who receive a tribute in kind, can, in cases of general danger, summon all the warriors to arms. Each tribe, however, is under the immediate command of its own chieftain, who is elected by the general voice, and holds his office independently of the Rajah. Their arms are bows and arrows, spears, clubs, and small hatchets. They use also, for defence, shields formed of the hide of the *gayal*, which they ornament on the inside with pendulous plates of brass, that make a tinkling sound, as the warriors toss about their arms, either in the dance or in battle. Strings of shells adorn their neck, tufts of red goat's hair their thighs and knees, and on their arms they wear broad rings of ivory, that they may appear the more terrific to their enemies. Their villages, which, as a whole tribe or clan always remain united, sometimes contain one or two thousand inhabitants, are erected on the steepest and most inaccessible summits of the mountains, and fortified with a thick bamboo palisade. Day and night, whether in peace or war, the passages leading into the village are strictly guarded, and the approach of a stranger is always viewed with jealousy and suspicion. Their dwellings are erected as close together as possible. Each house is sufficiently spacious to contain four or five families, and, like the chaungs of the Garrows, is constructed on a platform of bamboo, raised about six feet from the ground and entered by a ladder, or by a single post, with notches cut in it to receive the foot. These precautions are imperatively required by the state of constant danger and alarm in which they exist, each clan being generally at war with all its neighbours. Ambuscades, surprises, and the most bloody forays, which originate and perpetuate their feuds, rapidly

succeed each other. Stratagem, as among other savages, is always preferred to open combat. When, therefore, they engage in any hostile excursion, they never kindle a fire, but carry with them ready-dressed provisions sufficient for the occasion, and march in the night with the greatest expedition, and observing the most profound silence. When overtaken by the day, they halt, and lie concealed in a kind of hammock, which they fasten among the branches of the loftiest trees, so that they cannot be perceived by any person passing underneath. Hence has arisen the idea of their living in trees instead of houses. Having thus approached the enemy unperceived, they generally commence their attack about the dawn, with a great shout, and striking their spears against their shields. When victorious they spare neither age nor sex; unless some of the warriors happen to be childless, or in want of slaves, in which case the children are led away captive, and either adopted into the families of the conquerors or reduced to servitude. On such occasions they return to their village in triumph, bearing along with them the heads of the slain; but when fortune has been unfavourable to their arms, they seek their homes in silence, with the utmost privacy, and live in disgrace until some successful act of valour retrieve their character.

Notwithstanding their valour, however, their intestine divisions render them an easy prey to the *Banyoghis*, a less numerous, but more united people, who exact from two of their Rajahs a tribute of salt. This article, as elsewhere in the East, is here held as something sacred, and is borne like a passport in the hand of every messenger from one Kooki to another. Among the accomplishments of a Kooki, expertness in stealing is, next to valour, esteemed the greatest; and if one man succeed in robbing another, undiscovered, the property cannot lawfully be reclaimed.

If detected in the act, the ridicule of the village is his only punishment. The object of this regulation is to render them skilful in contriving, and watchful in warding off secret assaults and stratagems. The similar practice of the Spartans was founded on the same reasons. Like all other savages, the Kookies are ferociously vindictive, and require blood for blood. Even if the murderer be a tiger, the whole tribe immediately rush to arms, and go in pursuit of the animal. Should it be taken, the family of the deceased make a banquet of its flesh, in revenge for the death of their relation; but if, in this general pursuit of the whole tribe, the tiger be not destroyed, the family must still continue the chase, for, until a tiger be slain and eaten, they are regarded by the rest of the clan as in a state of excommunication. So, if a tiger kill one of a party of hunters or warriors, the remainder dare not return to the village until they have destroyed the animal. Nay, so blind are they in their revenge, that, if a man be killed by a fall from a tree, all his friends assemble, cut it down, and, having reduced it to chips, scatter it in the winds. The imprecations which Horace sportively launched against this kind of culprit, these barbarians, in the impotence of passion, utter in earnest. When circumstances compel them to desert their villages, they set fire to their dwellings, lest, if they were left standing, their *gayals* should return to them. The Kookies are not ignorant of agriculture, and raise, in a rude manner, different sorts of grains, roots, and vegetables, the women performing the greater part of the labour. A prodigious quantity of honey is found in their forests, but they know not how to separate it from the wax of the comb. They are, from various causes, such as the irregularity of the seasons, or the incursions of enemies, liable to frequent famines, during which the tribes living in amity afford each

other an assistance, which, when better times arrive, is always generously repaid. Their culinary utensils are strong earthen pots; but the hunter of the forest boils his food in a peculiar sort of bamboo. From the ashes of a different species of this plant he extracts a substitute for salt; and he kindles his fire by rubbing two dried pieces of the same wood against each other.

The Kookies can marry but one wife, though concubinage is tolerated. Adultery is punished with death. When a youth desires the hand of a virgin in marriage, the proposition is made by his father, who, on being questioned on these points by the father of the girl, replies that his son is a brave warrior, a good hunter, and an expert thief; that he can produce so many heads of game, and of enemies slain in battle; that in his house are such and such stolen goods; and that he can entertain so many at his marriage feast. If, upon inquiry, the facts are found to be as stated, the marriage immediately takes place, with great feasting and festivity. The winter months, as among the ancient Greeks, are generally selected for the celebration of marriage. Funerals take place only once a year. When a Kooki dies, his body is deposited on a platform erected under a shed at a distance from the dwelling-house, where food is daily placed before it, while some member of the family constantly keeps watch to protect it from dogs and birds. In this manner all the dead belonging to the village are preserved, in some cases during a whole year, until the 11th of April, when both the bodies and the sheds are burned. A feast is then given by the relations of the deceased, in succession, until one has taken place for each of the dead. A similar custom, as we learn from Bertram, prevails among the Indians of North America. They believe in the existence of God, and of a future state of rewards and

punishments; but imagine no action so agreeable to the divinity as slaughtering a great number of enemies. They offer up animals in sacrifice, and erect images in every village, but know nothing of priests or temples. There are no coins among them, except such as are brought from the plains. Fire-arms inspire them with indescribable terror[4].

Another singular people, probably a fragment of the aboriginal races of India, is the tribe inhabiting the Rajmahal hills in Bengal. They wholly differ from the natives of the plain in features, language, civilization, and religion, and by their lowland neighbours are denominated *Puharries*, or "mountaineers." Having no knowledge of letters, the records of their history are intrusted to tradition, which relates a singular story respecting the first peopling of their hills. To people the earth, seven brothers, they say, were sent down from heaven. At first they remained together, but the eldest falling sick, the other six collected together what food was in their power, which they agreed to divide, and afterwards to separate, each directing his footsteps towards a different country. The six younger brothers received each his portion in a new dish, but the eldest, being ill, was compelled to be content with the scraps remaining, which he threw altogether into an old dish; for which he was regarded as an outcast, and driven to take refuge in the hills. Here, from the sterility of the soil, which afforded neither clothing nor subsistence, both he and his descendants necessarily became thieves. The tradition probably refers to the events of that distant period, when the aboriginal tribes, like the Britons in our own country, were driven by hostile invaders to the fastnesses of the mountains. Their religious notions breathe a spirit of humanity, and, however imperfect, are, upon the whole, highly favourable to

[4] Asiatic Researches, vol. vii. p. 183—198.

morals. They believe in the doctrine of the metempsychosis, and in a future state of rewards and punishments. Their opinions render them averse, in many cases, from the shedding of blood, so that they will not slay even a tiger, unless under the injunctions of the *lex talionis*. They have a kind of priest, called *demauno*, who acts as the prophet and oracle of the tribe. The knowledge of the future is communicated in dreams, when their deity appears to them, and braids their hair, which thus acquires an extraordinary length. Their prophetic power, like Samson's strength, is supposed to reside in their locks, which are therefore never cut. To these priests the Puharree repairs when ill or in difficulties, and their responses, which are delivered in the morning, seem to be based upon the visions of the night, and are seldom belied by the event. Presents always accompany applications to the oracle. On the first full moon in January the demauno affects a kind of divine frenzy, rushes forth from his dwelling in frantic transports, and, like the Salian priests of Rome, scours the street in this condition, but without speaking or inflicting any injury. By signs, which are perfectly understood, he demands from the chief of the clan an egg and a cock, the former of which he instantly devours, and having twisted off the head of the latter, he sucks the warm reeking blood, and throws away the body. As if inspired with madness by the fumes of this horrid repast he now disappears from among men, and conceals himself during seven or nine days in the forests or jungles by the wild banks of some unfrequented river, where he is supposed to be fed by the deity. The tales which he relates on his return, of the wonders he has beheld in these remote solitudes, greatly enhance his authority: sometimes, he avers, the spirit seated him on a prodigious snake; at others,

caused him to put his hand without fear into the mouth of a tiger.

The Puharries, before they eat, always throw away a small portion of their food, and pour a libation on the ground before drinking. At a festival, celebrated once in three years, a cow is sacrificed, and eaten by all the men of the village, not disqualified by some secret uncleanness. Contrary to the usual practice, the women appear at this festival. The wives of the officiating priests, to whom several pieces of silk are presented, doff their garments and ornaments, and winding the silk round their waists, fasten their long hair in a knot on the crown of the head, mark their naked bodies with a mixture of turmeric and the flour of Indian corn, and in this state march in procession through the village to meet their husbands, all the inhabitants, men, women, and children, being assembled to behold them pass.

The Puharries are of an amorous temperament, and, when in love, their attentions to the objects of their affections are unceasing. Notwithstanding the facilities of meeting afforded by their free manner of living, the young women rarely transgress the laws of chastity._ Polygamy is allowed. Courtship, as in other parts of the East, is carried on by proxy and by presents; and on the day fixed upon for the marriage, the bridegroom, with his relations, proceeds to the house of the bride's father, who, when all the company have been properly feasted, takes his daughter's hand, and, giving it to the bridegroom, publicly admonishes him to use her kindly, and not to murder her, menacing him with retaliation. Should she die a natural death, or by means of the devil, it cannot be helped. A few unimportant ceremonies then succeed, and the business is concluded. Widows devolve to the brothers, cousins, or nephews of their deceased husbands, but, if so minded, may return

and pass the days of their widowhood at their fathers' house. Second marriages may be contracted by both sexes. Adultery is punished by a fine. The belief in sorcery and witchcraft is deeply rooted, as among all other barbarians, and frequently gives rise to events ludicrous in the commencement, but terminating tragically. When about to take an oath, they fix two arrows, with a little salt between them, in the ground, at such a distance from each other that the blade of the one and the feather of the other being brought together above, they shall form, with the surface of the earth between them below, an equilateral triangle. The person swearing takes the blade of one and the feather of the other between his finger and thumb. "On solemn occasions, however, salt is put on the blade of a sabre, and, after the words of the oath are repeated, the blade being placed on the under lip of the person sworn, the salt is washed into his mouth by him who administers it[5]."

Funeral ceremonies vary according to the circumstances and character of the deceased. The body of a still-born infant is put by the women into an earthen pot, and covered with leaves, after which the father carries it forth to the jungle, where it is deposited at the stem of a tree, and covered with brush-wood. An unweaned child is permitted interment in the public cemetery, where it is placed with its head towards the north, without further ceremony; but if it has been weaned, a funereal banquet must be given, and annually repeated ever after, at the festival of the *Harvest-Home*. When a person dies of the measles or small-pox, the corpse is borne on a bedstead to the distant jungles, where it is placed in the shade of a tree, covered with leaves and branches, and abandoned. Here, on the following year, a

[5] Bishop Heber's Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 281.

funereal banquet is given by the relations, when offerings of food and libations are made in the name of the deceased. The body of a priest is left unburied in the jungle. Other individuals are buried[6]. If, however, the deceased have died of dropsy, the body is thrown without sepulchral honours into a river.

When a native of one village has a claim on a person belonging to a neighbouring clan, which the latter refuses to satisfy, the injured party invokes the aid of his tribe, who willingly comply; the avengers proceed to the offender's village, plunder and pillage every person whom they can overpower, and carry away the debtor captive. Matters are thus brought to an issue. Arbitrators are appointed, and the captive released; and whatever loss or expense has been incurred on either side falls upon the luckless cause of the dispute. Sometimes, however, the village intended to be plundered receives intelligence of the expedition, and negotiations are set on foot. At other times the charge is denied, and the accused exhorts his chieftain to stand on the defensive, engaging hereafter to prove his innocence, or to defray all losses sustained. The village takes arms, every avenue leading into it is guarded, especially at night, when an attack is most dreaded. The invaders, seeing them on the alert, hover about the neighbourhood, harass them continually by false alarms, and when they are wellnigh spent with fatigue and watching, make their approaches, sending one of their number before them to scatter a soporific dust

[6] Priests being supposed to become devils after death, it is feared that, if buried in the public cemetery, they might return and destroy the villages; whereas, by being abandoned in the forests, they are compelled to play the devil elsewhere. Lieut. Shaw, Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. p. 70.

to windward of the village, which, it is believed, will put every soul within it asleep in less than an hour after dark. In this persuasion they rush to plunder, and commonly succeed, by the suddenness and impetuosity of their attack, in collecting and carrying away considerable booty.

The Puharries are middle-sized, or rather little men, but well made, with remarkably broad chests, and finely turned limbs. Their complexion is fairer than that of the Bengalese; they have broad faces, small eyes, and flattish turned-up noses; "but the Chinese or Malay character of their features, from whom they are said to be descended, is lost in a great degree on close inspection [7]." They have been thought to resemble the Welsh. Some of the women are pretty. They are adventurous, brave, and industrious, and manufacture for sale the small common Hindoostani bedsteads, and the wood-work of ploughs. They also bring down to the plains for sale wood, charcoal, bamboos, cotton, honey, plantains, sweet potatoes, and small quantities of grain. In the cultivation of the earth, which is conducted in a very rude fashion, the greater part of the labour, as is usual among barbarians, falls on the women, who for this reason are regarded as the greatest riches of their husbands. Instances of longevity are rare. The first attempts at civilizing these wild people were made by Augustus Cleveland, judge of the Bhâgulpoor district. A number of these mountaineers, admitted by him into the British service, have proved excellent soldiers, though latterly the corps has been neglected [8].

In the peninsula of Saurâshtra, or Guzerat, we

[7] Bishop Heber's Narrative, vol. i. p. 275.

[8] Lieut. Shaw, Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. p. 31—108; Bishop Heber's Narrative, vol. i. p. 249—284.

find a remarkable race of men, called the *Khatties*, or *Catties*, who exist in an equivocal state, which is neither barbarism nor civilization. The Khatties, by far the most important tribe of western India, are, like all other nations, desirous of asserting an ancient, heroic, and miraculous origin. Their early traditions are lost in mists of antiquity. When the five Pandoos, by the loss of a game at hazard, were compelled to go into exile, they arrived, after seven years' wandering, at Berat, where they were discovered by the spies of their enemy Duryôdhana. To provoke them to come forth, and thus forfeit the pledge they had given to remain in concealment, Carna, the minister of Duryôdhana, and offspring of the sun, projected a predatory attack on their cattle. But in such a foray no Rajpoot could be employed. Carna, to remove this difficulty, struck the earth with his staff, when the stick opened, and forth sprang a man, who was termed *Khat*, or "produced from wood." He was appointed to steal the cattle, and, to reconcile him to the enterprise, was informed by Carna that the gods would never reckon the commission of a robbery criminal in him or his descendants. The memory of Carna is still venerated by the Khatties, who worship his father the sun, inscribing on every deed or document they execute the effigies of that luminary[9]. They are always enumerated by genealogists among the royal races of India. None of the inhabitants of Guzerat present so many traits of originality as the Khatties, who, in religion, manners, and features, are decidedly Scythian. They are supposed to be the ancient Cathæi, (Arrian, v. c. 22,) who, at the time of Alexander's expedition, occupied a nook in the Panjâb, near the confluence of the five streams, and opposed their desperate valour to the progress of the

[9] Hamilton, Description of Hindoostan, vol. i. p. 644.

Macedonians. From thence the Khatties can be traced to their present haunts. Their exploits figure in the early annals of Jessulmere; their own traditions fix their migration into the Guzerat peninsula in the eighth century; and in the twelfth we find them engaged in the memorable wars between Prit'hivirâja and the monarch of Canouj. Addicted from the earliest times to predatory habits, the Khatti is never so happy as when on horseback, collecting, lance in hand, his *black mail* from friend and foe [10].

"The Khatti differs in some respects from the Rajpoot. He is more cruel in his disposition, but far exceeds him in the virtue of bravery; and a character possessed of more energy than a Khatti does not exist. His size is considerably larger than common, often exceeding six feet. He is sometimes seen with light hair and blue eyes. His frame is athletic and bony, and particularly well adapted to his mode of life. His countenance is expressive, but of the worst kind, being harsh, and often destitute of a single mild feature [11]." When these Scythian banditti arrived in Guzerat, they found the country in possession of the *Aheers* [12] and *Babreeas*, aboriginal tribes, whom they

[10] Colonel Tod, History of the Rajpoot Tribes, vol. i. p. 112.

[11] Capt. Macmurdo, Trans. Society of Bombay, vol. i. p. 270. Col. Tod, who quotes this passage, and in general agrees with the author's opinions of the Khatties, is careful, however, to remove from his favourite Rajpoots the imputation of being less brave than this people. "It is," says he, "the Rajpoot of Kattywar, not of Rajast'han, to whom Capt. Macmurdo alludes." Vol. i. p. 112, note. And, in fact, it would be difficult, after reading the Annals of Rajpootana, to conceive a nation excelling the Rajpoots in valour.

[12] The name *Aheer* seems to be a corruption of the Sanscrit *Abhira*, the designation of one of the mixed castes sprung from a Brahmin by a wife of the Ambasht'ha tribe, and whose occupation is the keeping of kine. See Menu, chap. x. ver. 15.

reduced to servitude. They themselves, however, continued their original habits for many ages, wandering about with their flocks over the great pastoral wastes, and seizing on every occasion of plundering their neighbours. They are supposed to have first become stationary about two hundred and sixty years ago; and their acquisitions of territory increased with the decline of the Mohammedan power. Even so late as the year 1807, their profession of thieves and robbers, bequeathed to them by Carna, was their public boast and glory; but though this laudable attachment to the habits of their ancestors no doubt still forms the leading trait of their character, they have been compelled by the ascendancy of the English to practise in secret.

Many families of Khatties profess to attend to the breeding of horses, but have intermarried with the *Aheers*, or herdsmen. The genuine Khatti never pays any fiscal demand, or parts with anything of his own rearing; though the chiefs, by a kind of compromise with their honour, allow revenue to be levied from their lands and herds. The tribe is not numerous, their character and manners being inimical to population: a great portion of their youth fall in predatory wars; private revenge and domestic feuds cut off many more; and the invasions and inroads of their enemies, provoked by their plundering habits, still farther reduce their numbers. It is not in their manners to unite in one formidable body under a single leader; they live under the authority of numerous petty chieftains, who possess small fortresses into which they retire with their booty. Like the marauding Bedouins they are chiefly rendered formidable by the excellence of their horses, and the celerity of their movements. When about to engage in a foray, they hire mercenaries, both to augment their numbers, and obtain the advantage of fire-arms, which they

themselves disdain to carry. Nevertheless, they greatly dread their effects, and, as when they anticipate the execution of these novel weapons, they are slow to attack, the villagers usually erect near their dwellings small mud towers, to which they retire with their cattle on the approach of the Khatties, whom they rake with musketry. They sometimes associate with very low castes, whose services they repay with the asses they capture. Of the horses which they breed, they sell the stallions, but retain the mares, which in their plundering expeditions do not betray them by their neighings.

Among this tribe the right of primogeniture is unknown, all the sons succeeding equally to the property of the father; but daughters do not inherit. Polygamy is allowed; yet they rarely marry more than two wives. Their women, who are proverbially graceful and beautiful, exercise great influence in domestic life, and frequently alleviate the miseries of the prisoners whom their husbands put to the torture to compel them to discover their treasures, or to extort large ransoms. The widow of an elder brother, unless she decline any future connexion, invariably descends to the younger, whose widow, on the other hand, is at liberty to act as she pleases. When a *Khattrijani*, or female Khatti, dies, her nearest relations inherit both her moveable property and her children, who are removed from their father's protection. Outlaws of every description find an asylum among this tribe, who, though highly treacherous to each other, seldom betray a suppliant guest. Intoxication is common. Their chief divinity is the sun, to whom they have erected a single temple near Thaun, which contains an image of the god. They have priests, whose functions seem to be limited to the solemnization of marriage, and the performance of obsequies for deceased ancestors. Their religious

feelings are feeble, and they possess no litany or form of prayers. Placing themselves with clasped hands in an attitude of adoration, they fix their eyes upon the sun, and supplicate his favour in such extemporaneous language as their conception of his omnipotence suggests. In the celebration of funeral ceremonies, instead of placing food before the cows, like the Hindoos, they give it to the lap-wings. Superstition exerts a powerful sway over their rude minds. In all the affairs of life they place great reliance upon omens, the most important of which is the call of a partridge, to the right or left; the latter being auspicious, the former the reverse. Before commencing an expedition they invoke the sun, *Bheenât'h*, and their other favourite gods, to whom they vow a share of the spoil. On their return the money thus vowed is expended on a banquet, to which the whole village is invited. The prosperous days of the Khatties are now passed away: their villages and forts are rapidly falling to decay; their country is covered with ruins; their power is broken; their chiefs in poverty [13].

Another wild tribe of western India are the *Kholies*, or *Coolies*. Speaking of the inhabitants of this portion of the peninsula, Bishop Heber remarks:—"The Guzerattees, particularly the Kholies, are a manly and bold-looking, though very troublesome and ferocious people, always armed to the teeth; and with their short kirtles, swords, shields, quivers, and bows (these last not made like those of Hindoostan, but in the common English form), gave me one of the liveliest impressions I ever received of the followers of our Robin Hood in Sherwood, or of the ancient inhabitants of that vale (Homesdale, I believe it is,) in Kent, which boasts that it 'was never won, nor ever shall' [14]."

[13] Hamilton, Description of Hindoostan, vol. i. p. 646.

[14] Letter to Lord Amherst: Life, &c. vol. ii. p. 334, 4to. edition.

Bernier, describing the flight of Dara after his defeat by his brother Aurungzebe, gives us a lively picture of the character and practices of the Kholies. "This unfortunate prince, deserted by almost all, and finding himself accompanied but by two thousand men at most, was forced in the hottest of summer to cross, without tents or baggage, all those countries of the Rajahs that extend almost from Ajmere to Ahmadabad. Meantime the Kholies, who are the country people, and the worst of all India, and the greatest robbers, follow him night and day, rifle and kill his soldiers, with so much cruelty that no man could stay two hundred paces behind the main body, but he was presently stripped naked, or butchered upon the least resistance." By his own experience, however, he found that these savage people were not wholly destitute of generosity; for, falling into their hands, together with his servant, who discovered to them his profession of physician, in consideration of his exercising his art upon their sick for a few days, he was kindly treated, furnished with an ox to travel on, and conducted from their fastness to within sight of Ahmadabad [15]. But the love of plunder is deeply rooted in the Kholi. Among the perpetrators of gang robberies, he stands conspicuous; and his habitations, situated amidst the wilds and jungles, were places of terror to the merchant and the traveller. Yet the thievish propensities of this wild tribe have recently been gradually repressed, and there is some hope that, by judicious measures, they may be added to the number of the industrious and peaceful subjects of Great Britain [16].

After the Kholies the tribe which next presents itself is that of the *Bhills*, or *Bheels*, a race of much

[15] Voyage to Surat, Osborne's collection, fo. vol. i. p. 131, 132. Oriental Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 63.

[16] Hamilton, Description, &c. vol. i, p. 677, 695, 697.

greater interest and importance, and highly deserving of attention. Whatever were their origin and genealogy, they have inherited from their ancestors, and through a long succession of ages maintained, an indomitable spirit of freedom, which prefers the hard fare of independence, earned with sweat and danger, or wrung by terror from their foes, and a dwelling in the desolate, dreary, and terrific places of the earth, to a sleek and cringing wealth, purchased by base submission to power, and by slaves dignified with the name of civilization. Driven by successful oppression from their ancient seats, we find them in Guzerat taking refuge among the wild ruins of Champaneer, abounding with the wrecks of temples, mosques, and tanks, and frowning in Alpine grandeur over the plain; and in Malwah and Khandeish plunging into the depths of the forests, or climbing the mountain fastnesses, where the tigers and other beasts of prey are their only companions. In Guzerat, as they have but little intercourse with strangers, their language is remarkably pure. They are found in great numbers in the southern division of Malwah, more especially among the mountains contiguous to the Nerbuddah and Tapti rivers, where their chiefs are in possession of all the principal passes. Here they subsist partly by agriculture, partly by hunting and plundering; while the Kholies delight in the sea-coast, where they employ themselves in fishing and piracy. Like all other savage people, particularly when hunted about by more powerful savages, the Bhills entertain an aversion for regular industry, and rejoice in an occasion of exerting their restless energy in predatory war. For this reason they have frequently been employed by native chiefs in desolating the territories of their enemies. A few of their number have occasionally been mounted and have served among the cavalry; but the great majority are infantry, ignorant of the

use of fire-arms, armed with bows and arrows, and nearly naked. On the decay of the Musulman governments of central India these fierce and hardy tribes, descending from their fastnesses, considerably extended their power, and began to dream of empire, when their irregular, ill-conditioned forces came in contact with the irresistible troops of Great Britain, and their ambitious hopes and projects perished in the shock[17].

Bishop Heber, to whom we are so deeply indebted for our knowledge of the various races of India, enjoyed, during his journey through western India, numerous and favourable opportunities of observing the physiognomy, costume, and more obvious habits of the Bhills. They first came within his notice at a fishing party, near the Buness river. "The fish," he observes, "were pursued in the shallow muddy water with sticks, spears, and hands in all directions; but there was little execution done, till four Bhills, in the service of the Oodipoor government, made their appearance. The rabble were then driven away, and these savages, with their bows and arrows, made in a few hours that havoc among the fish which produced such plenty in the camp, singling out the largest, and striking them with as much certainty as if they had been sheep in a fold. They were middle-sized, slender men, very dark, with frames which promised hardiness and agility more than much muscular strength. They were bare-headed, and quite naked, except a small belt of coarse cloth round the loins, in which they carried their knives. Their bows were of split bamboos, very simply made, but strong and elastic, more so, I think, than those of buffalo horn, which are generally used in Hindoostan. They were about

[17] Hamilton, Description, &c. vol. i. p. 681, 713, 729; ii. 96, 97. Compare Sir John Malcolm's Essay on the Bhills, Transact. of the Roy. Asiat. Society, vol. i. p. 65—91.

four feet six inches long, and formed like those of Europe. The arrows were also of bamboo, with an iron head, coarsely made, and a long single barb. Those intended for striking fish, had this head so contrived as to slip off from the shaft when the fish was struck, but to remain connected with it by a long line, on the principle of the harpoon. The shaft, in consequence, remained as a float on the water; and not only contributed to weary out the animal, but showed his pursuer which way he fled, and thus enabled him to seize it[18]." He elsewhere observes that, by those most deeply versed in the antiquities of India, the Bhills are regarded as unquestionably the original inhabitants of the country, driven to their present fastnesses and miserable way of life by the invasion of those tribes, wherever they may have come from, who profess the religion of Brahma. "This," he continues, "the Rajpoots themselves, in this part of India, virtually allow, it being admitted in the traditional history of most of their principal cities and fortresses, that they were founded by such or such Bhill chiefs, and conquered from them by such and such children of the sun.....Thieves and savages as they are, I found that the officers with whom I conversed, thought them on the whole a better race than their conquerors. Their word is more to be depended on; they are of a franker and livelier character; their women are far better treated, and enjoy more influence; and though they shed blood without scruple in cases of deadly feud, or in the regular way of a foray, they are not vindictive or inhospitable under other circumstances; and several British officers have, with perfect safety, gone hunting and fishing into their country, without escort or guide, except what these poor savages themselves cheerfully furnished for a little brandy.

[18] Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 466.

This is the more touching, since on this frontier nothing has been done for them, and they have been treated, I now find, with unmingled severity[19].

The habitations of the Bhills, in jungle or forest, are of the rudest description; sticks wattled with long grass, and thatch of the same, with boughs laid over it to protect the roof from the fury of the wind. They are crowded close together, apparently for mutual protection, and have a small thatched enclosure adjoining for their cattle. Their fields are surrounded with a neat fence of boughs, to protect the corn from the deer and antelopes; and both the people and the country remind the traveller of Bruce's description of the Shangalla. Many of them wear round their loins a plaited cotton petticoat: their beards and hair are thick and dishevelled; but though dirty and ill fed, maintain in their voice and demeanour a cheerfulness and vivacity indicative of an unconquerable will. On the approach of a party of strangers to any of their villages, one of the inhabitants immediately mounts the nearest hill, and utters a shrill shout or scream, which is repeated by the neighbouring hamlets, and is a signal divulging the number and power of the enemy. By this they know at once whether it is most desirable to attack or fly, or remain quiet; and if any have reason to apprehend an interview with the party, they have leisure for escape. A Bhill near Panchelwas exhibited in the presence of Heber his skill in archery, which was considerable; and at the same time showed the manner in which his

[19] Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 496. With that desire to do justice to merit, which was a distinguishing trait in his character, the traveller adds, that what Cleveland had effected for the Puharries, Sir John Malcolm had endeavoured to perform for the Bhills in the south; and his efforts, equally remarkable for good policy and humanity, were crowned with success.

countrymen shoot from amid the long grass, holding the bow with their feet. He was afterwards guided through their wild country by a party of Bhills. The principal food of the unsubdued tribes are the small pistachio nut, which grows wild in great abundance among their hills, and the fruit of the *mhowah*, a tree nearly resembling the oak, in the form of the branches and colour of the leaves; its flower, when dried, nearly resembles a small raisin, both in appearance and flavour, and yields by fermentation an intoxicating liquor[29].

Of the condition of those Bhills who have forsaken their original habits, and taken up their abode by the side of their hereditary remains, we may form a tolerably exact idea from the following passage, furnished by the same traveller. "We walked in the evening about the village (of Tambresra), the situation of which is beautiful: its inhabitants consist of Bhills and low caste Rajpoots. On the hill above were some noble mhowah trees, and under their shade some scattered Bhill huts, neater and better than any which I had seen. Each was built of bamboos, wattled so as to resemble a basket; they had roofs with very projecting eaves, thatched with grass, and very neatly lined with the large leaves of the teak tree: the upper part of each gable end was open for the smoke to pass out. The door was wattled and fastened with a bamboo plait and hinges, exactly like the lid of a basket; and the building was enclosed with a fence of tall bamboo poles, stuck about an inch apart, connected with cross pieces of the same, and with several plants of the everlasting pea trailed over it. Within this fence was a small stage elevated on four poles, about seven feet from the ground, and covered with a low thatched roof.

[29] Heber, Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 510, 511, 513, 514, 525.

My people said this was to sleep upon as a security from wild beasts; but I have no idea they could be in any danger from them within a bamboo fence, and in a house of the same material; since it is well known that the tiger, from apprehension of snares, will hardly ever come near this sort of enclosure. It might be used as a sleeping place, for the sake of coolness or dryness; but as each of these houses seemed to stand in the centre of its own little patch of Indian corn, I should rather apprehend it was intended as a post to watch it from[21]." These habitations are almost universally erected on a rising ground. On another occasion the Bhills exerted their dramatic powers, for the amusement of the traveller's retinue. "A number of Bhills, men and women, came to the camp, with bamboos in their hands, and the women with their clothes so scanty, and tucked so high, as to leave the whole limb nearly bare. They had a drum, a horn, and some other rude minstrelsy, and said they were come to celebrate the *hooli*. They drew up in two parties, and had a mock fight, in which at first the females had much the advantage, having very slender poles, while the men had only short cudgels, with which they had some difficulty in guarding their heads. At last some of the women began to strike a little too hard, on which their antagonists lost temper, and closed with them so fiercely that the poor females were put to the rout in real or pretended terror. They collected a little money in the camp, and then went on to another village[22]."

The reduction of the Bhills in the mountain fastnesses of Khandeish, which appears to have annihilated for ever their political power, and in which their

[21] Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 533.

[22] Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 541, 542. See also p. 546, 551, 557; vol. iii. p. 23.

utter insignificance, when opposed to a regular army, was made apparent, was thus described by Colonel John Briggs, in his examination before the Committee of Lords, 1830. When appointed political agent in Khandeish, he found the country in a very unsettled state, as it had been for the previous thirty years. "It had been overrun by bands of freebooters; I believe there were at different times about eighty distinct bodies which had been in the habit of ravaging the country. I think 1,100, out of, I believe, 2,700 villages, were rendered desolate altogether, and those which remained were open to the pillage of the Bhills. These people have been for a long period attached to villages as guardians or watchmen, with certain immunities in land and fees from the people themselves. The consequences of those ravages deprived the people of the means of supporting the Bhills, who went into the hills, and were in the habit of attacking the villages. To secure themselves from these assaults, the villagers procured the assistance of foreign soldiery, such as Arabs and Sindies. Many villages, not able to do this, purchased the forbearance of the Bhills by the alienation of lands, or rather portions of the produce (a sort of black mail)." When the English entered Khandeish, the Arabs had acquired great power and influence as well as the Bhills, whose daring conduct inspired great terror through the country. The Arabs, however, were first despatched. Those who had just claims received the amount of their demands; the refractory were expelled by force. The Bhills were next dealt with. The chiefs of gangs who had taken post on the hills were invited to descend; their claims on the villages for immunities or *black mail* were examined; and according as the case stood, pensions were granted them, upon condition that their followers should return to their duty. Their numbers, at this period, according to popular estima-

tion, fell little short of five thousand, who were scattered through the country under the command of about forty chiefs. Of these some were brought back to their duty by peaceful measures. Others, relying on the strength of their positions, held out until military operations were directed against them, their supplies cut off, and all their hopes dissipated. They then, without bloodshed, surrendered at discretion; so that during this mountain warfare, which continued during four years, not more than fifteen or twenty lives were lost. In proportion as they were subdued, the Bhills returned to their habitations, and became the village police. The signal humanity of the conduct pursued by Colonel Briggs is deserving of high praise. The forces under his command were never, he observes, employed in actual military operations, except in the reduction of the town of Amulneer, after the peace; but they were frequently employed in surrounding the haunts of the Bhills, in order to reduce them to subjection. On these occasions, the orders the officers received were not to fire upon them, if they could possibly take them. They were mostly armed with bows and arrows; they were found to be a very contemptible enemy; and, for the purpose of sparing bloodshed, they were not fired upon [3].

In the mountains of Rajpootana we find another savage tribe, called *Mairs* or *Mēras*. Their country, *Mairwarra*, or "the region of hills," is that portion of the Aravulli chain lying between Comulmere and Ajmere, and may be about ninety miles in length, by from six to twenty in breadth. It is of quite an Alpine character, and abounds with architectural antiquities, and rare productions of nature. The inhabitants are a branch of the *Mēnas* or *Mainas*,

[3] Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, July 8th, 1808, p. 289, 291, 292.

one of the aboriginal tribes of India. From a spirit of flattery, perhaps, rather than vanity, these wild races mingle their pedigree with that of their conquerors, claiming to be descended from the last Chohan, emperor of Delhi. But the traditions of such barbarians are of little value, being almost always molded into the form most agreeable to their interest or their passions. Their manners are less flexible. It has already been shown to be probable, that the wild tribes of India then first addicted themselves to robbery when driven from their richer and more accessible possessions by lawless invaders, to plunder and retaliate upon whom was patriotism. The Rajpoots, who drove the Mairs to take refuge in the Alpine regions of the Aravulli, did not always disdain, in spite of the superiority of their arms, to mingle their blood with that of the brave aborigines, been however, if we may credit the poetical testimony of *Chund*, the Homer of Rajpootana, were reduced "to carry water in the streets of Ajmere;" but though beat, they were not broken. Whenever fortune afforded an occasion of revenge, and, thanks to the internal dissensions of the Rajpoots, these were not wanting, the mountaineers eagerly flew to arms, and, uniting themselves with one of the contending parties, drenched their avenging weapons in the gore of their oppressors. The gloomy and terrible satisfaction with which they mingled in these sanguinary affrays is thus described by the heroic bard of Rajast'han. "Where hill joins hill, the Mair and Mêna thronged. The Mundore chief commanded that the pass should be defended—four thousand heard and obeyed, each in form as the angel of death—men who never move without the omen, whose arrow never flies in vain—with frames like Indra's bolt—faithful to their word, preservers of the land and the honour of Mundore, whose fortresses have to this

day remained unconquered—who bring the spoils of plains to their dwellings. Of these, in the dark recesses of the mountains, four thousand lay concealed, their crescent-formed arrows beside them. Like the envenomed serpent, they wait in silence the advance of the foe." The enemy "advanced, but the Mair was immoveable as Soomair (Sumeru?) Their arrows carrying death, fly like Indra's bolts—they obscure the sun[24]. Warriors fall from their steeds, resounding in their armour as a tree torn up by the blast. Kana quits the steed; hand to hand he encounters the foe; the feathery shafts, as they strike fire, appear like birds escaping from the flames.....The battle rages—Durga gluts herself with blood—the air resounds with the clash of arms and the rattling of banners—the sword rains on the foe—Kshetrapâla sports in the field of blood—Mahâdêva (Siva) fills his ne[illegible] (of skulls)—the eagle gluts itself on the slain—[illegible] men of the warriors expands, as does the lotos a[illegible] sunbeam—the war-song resounds—with a branc[illegible] the *toolsi* on the helm, adorned in the saffron robe, the warriors on either side salute each other[25]."

From this account of Chund, the Mair of the twelfth century appears to have been, like his descendant of the present day, a bold licentious

[24] There would here seem to be a classical allusion (for which, if so, we must be indebted to the translator) to that characteristic reply of a Greek to the timid exaggeration of a person who, in describing the prodigious armament which the great king was about to conduct against Greece, said that the multitude of their arrows would darken the sun. "Then," replied the hero, "we shall fight in the shade."

[25] Colonel Tod, to whom we are indebted for these passages, has promised the public a complete translation of the heroic poems of Chund. We trust nothing may occur to prevent the fulfilment of this promise; for, from the specimens which he has already published, it is clear that we do not overrate their value in classing them among the most interesting and important productions of the East.

marauder. Years have made but little impression on his habits. Like a mountain torrent, alternately overflowing the country, and shrinking from its bed, he was by turns, during the Mogul domination, the oppressed and the oppressor; and, on the Mahratta conquest, "regained all his consequence, and was rapidly encroaching upon his Rajpoot suzerain. But when, in 1821, their excesses made it imperative to reduce their holds and fastnesses, they made no stand against the three battalions of *sipahees* sent against them, and the whole tract was compelled to obedience; not, however, till many of the descendants of Cheeta and Burrar had suffered both in person and property. The facility with which we reduced to entire subjection this extensive association of plunderers, for centuries the terror of these countries, occasioned no little astonishment to our allies." But the Mair was no longer what he had once been; circumstances, upon which his political importance depended, had changed; he could no longer find among one Rajpoot tribe protection from the vengeance of another; every avenue was blocked up; the redoubtable arms of England were arrayed against him; and he saw that his wisest course was submission[26].

In manners and customs the Mairs strikingly differ from the inhabitants of the plain. Omens and auguries never enjoyed greater consideration among the superstitious citizens of Rome than in Mairwarra. Widows, excluded from any second legal connexion by the more rigid Hindoos, may here enjoy a second time the advantages of marriage; but in the nuptial coronet the bridegroom must substitute a small branch of the sacred peopal, wreathed in his turban, for the graceful palmyra leaf. In other respects the forms prescribed by the common Hindoo ritual are followed,

[26] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 650—655.

even by such of the clans as have embraced the Mohammedan religion. Divorce may be easily obtained. "If tempers do not assimilate, or other causes prompt them to part, the husband tears a shred from his turban, which he gives to his wife, and with this simple bill of divorce, placing two jars filled with water on her head, she takes whatever path she pleases, and the first man who chooses to ease her of her load becomes her future lord. This mode of divorce is practised not only amongst all the Mênas, but by Jâts, Goojurs, Aheers, Mallis, and other Sudra tribes. 'She took the jar and went forth,' is a common saying among the mountaineers of Mairwarra."

The oaths and imprecations of the Mairs are peculiar. Such as have become Mohammedans swear by *Allah*; but the unconverted clans invoke the names of their great ancestors, the sun, or their ascetic priest, called the *Nât'h*. Excepting the Musulmans, who abstain from the hog, these mountaineers devour all kinds of food, or if they respect the cow, it is merely in compliance with the prejudices of those around them. Their chief birds of omen are the partridge and the wag-tail, and when setting out on a foray, if they hear the call of the former on the left, it is a certain prognostication of success. "Mairwarra is now in subjection to the Rana of Mewar, who has erected small forts amidst the most influential communities to overawe them. The whole tract has been assessed; the chiefs of the districts being brought to the Rana's presence presented *nuzrana*, swore fidelity, and received, according to their rank, gold bracelets or turbans. It was an era in the annals of Mewar, to see the accumulated arms of Mairwarra piled upon the terrace of the palace at the capital [27]."

[27] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 656; Heber, Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 443, 444.

In the Dekkan the number of wild tribes who burrow in caves in the mountains, or roam through the pathless forests, has never yet been ascertained. Travellers, however, have caught rapid glimpses of some few of these savages, whose manners are but little known even to their Hindoo neighbours; and we have already, in a former chapter, given a brief description of the *Chensu Carir*, a solitary and miserable race, who may be regarded, perhaps, as one of the least civilized of the tribes of the coast. But as we proceed towards the interior, and draw near the frontiers of Gundwana, savages of a fiercer description and more atrocious character present themselves. Here at every step we find how true it is, that "it is not good for man to be alone." Habituated for ages to behold no human countenance not resembling their own, to subsist slothfully and precariously amidst rank luxuriant forests, or in the utter desolation of mountains, they grow to assimilate with the scenes around them, until their souls are transformed into so many dens haunted by every malignant and gloomy passion. This may be predicated generally of all those savage races, though to some it applies more, to others less strongly. The *Baydaru*, or hunters, of the Mysore, who, under Tippoo Sultan, were employed as irregular troops, returned, when that occupation was ended, to their original habits, exchanging the chase and plunder of elephant[s] for every helpless creature who fell in their way. Should the[y] pursuit of deer and tigers through the woods[29]. attempt to [re]tain their keen appetite for plunder, and and kill the[m] ly, like wild beasts, about the villages, in armed with [s]y off the cattle. Other small tribes, more plain no [l]more insignificant, apply themselves to made [b]f industry, and roam through the forests huts, wh[o] f *lac*, bees'-wax, and wild honey, or feed as t[h]

[29] Buchanan, Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. i. p. 179, 278.

goats or cattle. Four kinds of bees supply the honey collected by these wild people: the *togriga*, a very small bee which seldom stings, and, instead of erecting a dwelling for itself, takes possession of the deserted nests of the *termes*, or white ant, which are from four to six feet high, very hard, and able long to resist the heaviest rain; these abound in the wastes of red soil, and when not occupied by the *togriga* bee, often become the haunts of serpents: the *tuduvay* bee, whose excellent honey is difficult to be procured, as it generally builds deep in the crevices of rocks totally inaccessible to man, though its nest is sometimes found in hollow trees: the *kadi*, a very small bee, which builds around the branch of a tree, a comb of an oblong shape, sharpened at both ends; its honey is of the most excellent quality, but exceedingly scanty: these three species of bee rarely or never sting, and are easily plundered: not so the *hegenu*, a large bee which builds its nest in caverns or under the projections of rocks: the honey, in this case, is procured with danger, so that few but those who make a business of it, venture to approach the hives: this is one of the professions of the Baydaru, who collect the honey shortly after the winter and summer solstices. Having discovered a hive, they kindle a fire under the rock, and cast into the flames the leaves of the *Cassia fistula* and of the *pulesera*, which emit a smoke so acrid that nothing living can long contract it. The bees being put to flight, the hunter, being let down by a rope one of their companions, with a *karana*, or pole knocks off the nest, and is immediately drawn up again; for, should he delay, the bees return in the rage and sting him to death. To protect himself from the storms of sharp points of the rocks, and from the bees at the end of the rope which passes round his chest, the hunter is defended before and behind by several folds of leather.[29]

[29] Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 391, 392.

The *Goalas*, or herdsmen, may very properly be reckoned among the wild tribes, though they now hire themselves to the rich inhabitants of the cities and towns to manage their flocks and herds. Generally they reside in huts near the villages, on the borders of great wastes, or in the woods, where small reservoirs are formed to supply their cattle with water. Here they never sleep in a hut, but wrapping themselves up in a blanket, lie down among the cattle with their dogs, burning fires all night to keep away the tigers, which, nevertheless, sometimes break through and kill or mutilate their cattle. They have no fire-arms, and for repelling wild beasts, trust wholly to their fires, and the noise made by themselves and their dogs[30].

In Carnata we find a rude tribe, called *Cad' Curubaru*, subsisting without dwellings in the fields, covered with rags, with matted hair, and haggard features. Of these some hire themselves as labourers, others at certain seasons of the year, watch the fields at night, to keep off the wild boars and elephants. The boars are repelled by slings, the elephants with burning torches, made of bamboos. The elephant sometimes turns, and awaits the coming up of the *Curubaru*, but they, taught by experience, push boldly on, and dash their torches against the elephant's head, and invariably put him to flight. Should they themselves, through lack of courage, attempt to fly, the elephant would instantly pursue and kill them. Though thus bold by night, when armed with their torches, by day they dread the elephant no less than other peasants. Great ravages are made among them by the tigers, against which their huts, when they erect any, are a poor defence, as well as their burning torches, of which, when pressed by hunger, these ferocious beasts are utterly regardless.

[30] Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 5, &c.

Their food consists of whatever they can take in the woods, as hares, deer, and antelopes, which they hunt down with dogs; and they take in snares peacocks and other esculent birds. They believe in a future state, and worship a female deity, called "the Little Mother of the Hill." Some burn, others bury the dead[31].

The *Soligas*, a tribe inhabiting the hills in the vicinity of the Cavery, are a remarkably rude people, speaking an ancient dialect of the Carnata, but in features resembling the savages of Chittagong. At night they sleep round a fire on a few plantain leaves, with which they also cover themselves. By day they go nearly naked. Their huts, which they erect on the bleak summits of mountains not frequented by the tiger, are most wretched, consisting of a few bamboos, the stem and top of which are fixed in the earth, so as to form an arch, and covered with plantain leaves. Their employment consists in hewing timber, and in collecting wild *yams*, various esculent leaves, and wild honey. They have no domestic animals, nor have they the art of killing game. Yet they are not wholly ignorant of agriculture, the principal labour of which, however, devolves on the women. Polygamy is permitted; adultery unknown; and the aged are kindly provided for by their children. The dead are interred, and it is believed that if the obsequies be neglected, the souls of the dead, assuming the character of devils, will torment their undutiful children. Being poor they have no priests[32].

Another wild tribe is found in the mountains between Coimbatore and Malabar. They are called *Eriligaru*, and many marvellous tales are related of them by the Hindoos, among others that they go absolutely naked, sleep under trees, and charm tigers,

[31] Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 128.
[32] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 178.

so that when the women go into the woods in search of roots, they intrust their young children to the care of these animals. Their villages, called *cambays*, are erected on the mountains, and are built round a square enclosure, in which a large fire is kindled nightly to keep off the wild beasts. Both sexes take an equal share in the labours of agriculture. They possess fowls, goats, and in some instances, cows; understand the art of taking wild-fowl in nets; and of killing tigers in stone traps; and have large orchards of plantains and lime trees[33].

Among these savage races we must also class the *Niadis*, a tribe of outcasts in Malabar, who are regarded as so very impure that even a slave will not touch them. They speak a very bad dialect, and have acquired a prodigious strength of voice, by being constantly necessitated to bawl aloud to those to whom they wish to speak. They absolutely refuse to perform any kind of labour; and almost their only means of procuring subsistence is watching the crops, to drive away wild hogs and birds. They are likewise employed to rouse game, by hunters, who reward them with one fourth of what they kill. Tortoises and crocodiles, which they take with hooks, they consider delicious food. However, begging is their chief resource. They go nearly naked, and have a few wretched huts erected under trees in remote places; but generally wander about in small companies, avoiding the great roads, and, when they see any traveller, setting up a loud howl, like so many hungry dogs. They who are moved by compassion place upon the ground what they wish to bestow, and go away; on which the Niadis approach, and put what is left for them in their baskets. They sacrifice yearly in the month of March to a female spirit, and bury their dead. They practise no marriage cere-

[33] Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 247.

monies; but one man lives with one woman; and infidelity is unknown[34]. "The shepherds of Mysore and their families live," says Buchanan, "with their flocks. The men wrap themselves in a blanket, and sleep in the open air among the sheep. The women and children sleep under hemispherical baskets, about six feet in diameter, and wrought with leaves so as to turn the rain. At one side a small hole is left open, through which the poor creatures can creep, and this is always turned to leeward, there being nothing to cover it. I have not in any other country seen a habitation so very wretched[35]."

From these miserable tribes of the Dekkan, we pass to a wandering race, which once, in all probability, formed one of their number, though now found scattered in small parties through all lands. We speak of the *Gipseys*, in whom you may contemplate, under an English hedge, the complexion, the physiognomy, and all the distinctive characteristics of the wild aboriginal inhabitants of India. We cannot, in this place, exhibit that chain of evidence by which the Hindoo origin of the Gipseys has been established almost beyond a doubt by the learned Grellmann[36]. It appeared perfectly satisfactory to Sir William Jones,

[34] Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 413, 414.

[35] Ibid. vol. iii. p. 383. See also Report from the Lords, 1830, p. 115.

[36] Bishop Heber too, with his usual ingenuity, has summed up the evidence in favour of this hypothesis, though he seems inclined to derive the race from Persia rather than India. As he has omitted to state his reasons, we cannot conceive upon what grounds this opinion is founded, though no doubt they were neither slight nor few. Their identity with the wandering tribes of Louristan, Kurdistan, &c., even were it fully proved, would not go very far in support of the supposition, as these also may have derived their origin from India. Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 130—132. See also Col. Harriot's observations on the Oriental Origin of the Gipseys, in the Transact. of the Roy. Asiat. Soc. vol. ii. p. 518—558.

who, in the Gipsey vocabulary published by the German writer, discovered a great number of pure Sanscrit words[37]. The Gipseys who have remained in India are at present known under the Persian name of *Bazighurs*, "players, or actors," and are divided into seven castes, whose uncouth denominations it is unnecessary to repeat, as they all resemble each other, intermarry, and profess to be descended from the same family. They have now become nominal converts to Islamism, but are said to regard as their tutelar divinity the celebrated musician Tansine, who flourished in the time of Acbar. Their notions of morals and religion they principally derive from the songs of Kubeer, a poet, by trade a weaver, who was contemporary with Shêr Shah, the Cromwell of Indian history. Kubeer was a *Sufi* of the most exalted sentiments and of benevolence unbounded. His poems, which are still universally esteemed, inculcate the purest morality, good-will, and hospitality towards all men; and breathe so fine a spirit of toleration that both Hindoos and Musulmans contend for the honour of his having been born of their nation. The Bazighurs have, therefore, it must be acknowledged, an excellent moral instructor; and if they are not more rigid cultivators of honesty than their brethren of Europe, the fault must rest with themselves. Be this as it may, the stanzas of the bard are for ever in their mouths. To any question respecting their opinions they commonly reply in his verses; as when interrogated concerning their ideas of the state of the soul after death, a poetical Gipsey made answer:—

> "Nor soul nor love divine can die;
> Although our frame must perish here,
> Still longing hope points to the sky:
> Thus sings the poet *Dâs Kubeer*."

[37] On the Borderers, Mountaineers, and Islanders of Asia; Works, vol. iii. p. 170, 171.

They believe their souls to be particles of the universal spirit, in which it is after death absorbed. In this life, feasting and drinking constitute their supreme good; and every kind of crime may be expiated by plentiful libations, except, perhaps, the indiscreet disclosure of their opinions to strangers, which is characteristically punished by rubbing the offender's nose against the ground. They call in the aid of a Brahminical astrologer, to fix on a lucky name for their children, notwithstanding that they profess Mohammedanism; and permit the urchins to remain at the breast until five or six years of age. This practice, together with the violent exercises which they are taught in their youth, probably tends to curtail the lives of their women, who, generally handsome and engaging, pass the morning of their lives as tumblers or dancing-girls. Before marriage no restraint is put upon their passions; but as they choose their own husbands, and are never constrained to marry earlier than their own inclinations prompt, it is believed that, having once contracted an engagement, they are generally faithful to their vows. They have no fixed dwellings; but wherever they encamp, erect temporary huts with light mats of sedge or rushes. They go about in companies, like our strolling players, hiring their services for a stated period, generally a year, to a *sirdar*, or manager. Some of these people, with a pliancy truly oriental, always profess the religion of the village near which they happen to be encamped; though it is believed that, among themselves, the goddess Kali is the real object of their worship.

"In the upper provinces of Hindoostan, the little encampments of these people are frequently very regular and neat, being there formed by the *sirki* (rushes) entirely. Each apartment, though not much larger than a mastiff's kennel, has its own

particular enclosure or court-yard, generally erected in such a manner as to become a species of circumvallation to the whole portable hamlet, which, at first sight, reminds a traveller of Lilliput or Fairy Land. The appearance of the people alone can undo the deception, and then even one cannot help wondering where so many men, women, children, and *other* domestic animals, manage to sleep or shelter themselves from the storms which sometimes assail these itinerant people." The men, who are remarkably athletic, practise not only juggling in all its branches, but perform feats requiring the most consummate agility and prodigious strength. Many of them obtain a livelihood by leading about dancing bears or monkeys. Others, impatient of the arts of petty roguery, become *Dacoits*[39]; and as such, says their historian, are no doubt often hanged. They inter their dead, he observes, and the only ceremony seems to be to forget their sorrows, by getting completely drunk immediately afterwards. Little more formality accompanies their marriage. The lover and his mistress having agreed between themselves, and fixed on a day for the marriage, the bridegroom, accompanied by all his relations, male and female, proceeds to the house of the bride, where he at first meets with a mock refusal from her friends. Presently, however, they relent, and bring forth the young woman, saying, "Here is your bride, behave kindly to her." The bridegroom now marks her forehead with a little red powder, exclaiming, "This

[39] "*Daka* means robbery, and in the active form becomes *dukyt*, notorious for their depredations as pirates in the Sunderbund branches of the Ganges, by the name of *Decoits*. If we may credit very respectable testimonies of the fact, these Dukyts are frequently guilty of sacrificing human victims to Kali, under circumstances of horror and atrocity scarcely credible." Asiatic Researches, vol. vii. p. 465.

woman is my wedded wife!" The bride performs nearly the same rite, and repeats a similar form of words; after which they sit down together, and unite their little fingers. A banquet, accompanied by furious merriment and intoxication, with a few other unimportant ceremonies, concludes the matter.

In their habits, the Gipseys are far more uncleanly than the ordinary Hindoos, and devour all kinds of food, even the dead bodies of jackalls, bullocks, and horses. They sometimes, in addition to their profession of jugglers, employ themselves in collecting medicinal herbs, and in catching *mungooses*, squirrels, and the bird called *daho*, which they use as food or medicine. The women practise physic, cupping, palmistry, and *tattooing*, to which the Hindoo women are still addicted; and usually sally forth in the morning from their encampment, with a quantity of herbs, dried birds, &c., to exhibit their skill among the women of the neighbouring villages. Should they not return before the jackall's cry[39] is heard in the evening, their fidelity is suspected, and they are punished by their husbands. The following song, in which a juggler describes his feats, will apply equally well to the performances of the Gipsey, whether in the east or in the west:—

"I from lovers tokens bear:
I can flowery chaplets weave,
Amorous belts can well prepare,
And with courteous speech deceive:
Joint-stool feats to show I'm able:
I can make the beetle run
All alive upon the table,
When I show delightful fun.

[39] Bishop Heber, in describing the cry of the jackall, observes, "The noise was quite equal to that of an immense pack of hounds, with half the rabble of a county at their heels, except that the cry was wilder and more dismal." Vol. i. p. 287.

At my slight-of-hand you'll laugh;
At my magic you will stare.
I can play at quarter-staff;
I can knives suspend in air;
I enchantment strange devise,
And with cord and sling surprise[40]."

Though many Gipseys are found in Bengal, more particularly in the district of Burdwan, they appear to linger in preference among the wild haunts of the upper provinces. On the shores of the Ganges they sometimes subsist by fishing. Bishop Heber, in sailing up the river, observed one of their encampments, which consisted of a number of small mean huts, patched in a temporary way with boughs and rushes. "Some of them came out of their booths as we passed," he says; "a race that no man can mistake, meet them where he may, though they are, as might be expected from their latitude and their exposure to the climate, far blacker here than in England, or even than the usual race of Bengalese are. They are the same tall, fine-limbed, bony, slender people, with the same large, black, brilliant eyes, lowering forehead, and long hair curled at the extremities, which we meet on a common in England. I saw only one woman, and her figure was marked by the same characters. In height she would have made two of the usual females of this country, and she stepped out with the stride and firmness of a Meg Merrilies. Of the gipsey cast of her features I could not, however, judge; since, though half naked, she threw a ragged and dirty veil over her face, as soon as she saw us. This trait belongs to the upper provinces. In Bengal, a woman of her rank would not have thought concealment necessary. There were no boats immediately near them; but a little

[40] Captain David Richardson, Asiatic Researches, vol. vii. p. 451—479; with the curious and learned notes furnished by another writer.

further we overtook several filled with the same sort of people[41]." The men, whom he afterwards saw at another encampment, wore large pink turbans; while the women, who followed him begging, were quite naked, except a ragged cloth round the waist: yet their forms were such as a sculptor would have been glad to take as his model. Their arms and forehead were tattooed with many blue lines. The children were perfectly naked[42]. He met with a party of the same race on the skirts of the Himâlaya, where he observed that the women were handsome, though tawdrily dressed, and disfigured with ornaments. Again, at the village of Mon, in descending towards the south, a large troop of Gipseys presented themselves before him. "They were very merry, but very poor wretches, and the leanest specimens of human life I have ever seen; so wretched, indeed, was their poverty, that I immediately sent for a supply of pice to distribute among them, pending the arrival of which, a man and woman, who seemed the Tramezzani and Catalani of the party, came forward, and sung two or three songs, the man accompanying them on a vina, a small guitar like the Russian balalaika. Their voices were really good; and though they sung in the vile cracked tone which street-singers have all the world over, the effect was not unpleasant; but it was a strange and melancholy thing to hear a love song, expressive, so far as I could catch the words, of rapture and mutual admiration, trilled out by two ragged wretches, weather-beaten, lean, and smoke-dried. The poor children, though quite naked, seemed the best fed, and I thought they seemed kind to them; though one old man, who was the head of a party, and had an infant slung in a

[41] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 231.
[42] Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 287.

dirty cloth, like a hammock, to a stick, which he carried in his hand, held it carelessly enough; insomuch that, till I asked him what he had in his bundle, and he opened his cloth to show me, I did not suppose it was a child [43]."

In his Essay on the Languages and Literature of the Indo-Chinese Nations, Leyden gives the following curious account of a race whom he terms *Sea-Gipseys*. "The *Biajus* are of two races; the one is settled on Borneo, and are a rude, but warlike and industrious nation, who reckon themselves the original possessors of the island. The other is a species of Sea-Gipseys, or itinerant fishermen, who live in small covered boats, and enjoy a perpetual summer on the eastern ocean, shifting to leeward, from island to island, with the variations of the monsoon. In some of their customs this singular race resemble the natives of the Maldive islands. The Maldivians annually launch a small bark, loaded with perfumes, gums, flowers, and odoriferous wood, and turn it adrift at the mercy of the winds and waves, as an offering to the *spirit of the winds;* and sometimes similar offerings are made to the spirit whom they term the *King of the Sea.* In like manner the Biajus perform their offering to the god of Evil, launching a small bark, loaded with all the sins and misfortunes of the nation, which are imagined to fall on the unhappy crew that may be so unlucky as first to meet with it [44]."

Descending still lower in the scale of civilization, we find the wild tribes of *Gundwana*, the *Gonds*, the *Khoonds*, and the *Carwars*. The last-named race are not wholly ignorant of cultivation, and erect their rude dwellings in the solitary recesses of the hills. At the approach of strangers, men, women, and children, nearly in a state of Nature, betake themselves

[43] Narrative of a Journey, &c, vol. i. p. 272.
[44] Asiatic Researches, vol. x. p. 216.

to flight, and seek concealment in the woods. Their arms consist of bows and arrows; a few dried gourds for carrying water are their only furniture, and the fowls found in their hamlets are nearly as wild as themselves. When the mountain winds are bitter, having no clothing, they kindle a blazing fire, round which they sit all night. Some of them are armed with hatchets, which they use with great dexterity in lopping the jungle. Like all other wild people, they delight greatly in a roving life, and have little or no local attachment.

The villages of the Gonds are likewise situated on the summits of mountains, or in the depths of almost inaccessible forests. More unsocial than the Carwars, they desert their villages on the approach of strangers, and though in some instances hovering near, and appearing at intervals between the rocks and trees, can seldom, even by the most unequivocal demonstrations of peaceful intentions, be tempted to return to their habitations. Sometimes the traveller succeeds, by force or persuasion, in procuring a guide; but the savage quickly becomes weary of pursuing any regular track, and escapes, or sullenly refuses to act. An English officer, crossing these desolate regions in 1795, with a considerable escort, was frequently embarrassed by their untractable character. "Our guides, who had now," he says, "accompanied us two days' journey, being impatient for their discharge, were under the necessity of pressing a man into the village to see what remained of his pillaged habitation[45]. He was naked, having nothing about him but his bow and arrows, and appeared at first a good deal terrified; but on being fed, and treated kindly, he soon became pacified. As the evening approached, we heard a hallooing in the woods, and,

[45] The whole country had recently been plundered by the Mahrattas.

after listening with attention, we found it was the mountaineers inquiring for their lost companion, whom they were seeking with much anxiety. We made him answer them that his person was safe, and that he was well treated; upon which they retired, apparently satisfied[46]."

Occasionally, when collected together in large numbers, these stout hardy barbarians exhibit less reluctance to be approached by strangers, and readily act as guides through their native wildernesses. They live in the most profound ignorance. Even silver and gold are unknown to the Gonds; but their place is supplied by *cowries*, those small sea-shells which are the money of savages in so large a portion of Asia[47], and which Mungo Park found current in the heart of Africa. The tigers, which in these wilds increase and multiply prodigiously, sometimes invade and lay waste whole villages, slaughtering the inhabitants, and carrying off their cattle, so that the remnant which remains, sets fire to the luckless huts, and retires elsewhere. Apprehensive of the number of their enemies, the mountaineers do not venture to retaliate, as they are persuaded that, should they destroy a single tiger, the rest, in return, would undoubtedly be revenged both on them and their cattle, and depopulate the whole country. They therefore trust entirely to *Bhavânî* in this matter. The Gonds themselves inflict similar misfortunes upon their neighbours, plundering, murdering, and firing villages, like the savage *Chouans* of La Vendée. To effect their purposes with the greater facility, they roam about in large bodies, diffusing, wherever they

[46] Captain Blunt, Asiatic Researches, vol. vii. p. 87. This adventure recals to mind the brief dialogue between Polyphemus and his brethren in the Odyssey, when those fierce mountaineers evinced, like the Gonds, considerable anxiety for the fate of their comrade, and were no less easily satisfied.

[47] The shells so used in India are those of the *cypræa moneta*.

move, consternation and dismay. When plundering becomes impracticable, or insufficient to supply their wants, they clear small spots in the forests, cutting down the trees to within about three feet of the ground, and interweaving the branches, so as to form round their enclosures a fence against wild beasts. Having removed the intervening grass and creepers, they cultivate in these spots a little maize or Indian corn.

Like the *Kholees*, they hang incessantly on the rear of travellers or armies moving through their country, to cut off stragglers, and seize upon such booty as may be less strictly guarded; and their feats, though on a small scale, remind us of those Thracians who beset the army of the proconsul Cneius Manlius, in his return from Asia, and snatched from the Romans a portion of the spoils which they had collected, like Buccaneers, in the east[48]. According to a Gosain, who was long their prisoner, they sometimes sacrifice human victims to their gods, selected generally from among their captives. Even *Fakirs*, who are respected by most other savages, have been murdered, in the attempt to penetrate through the country, by the Gonds. The only individuals who venture with impunity into these inhospitable regions are the *Brinjarries*, or "corn-merchants," who frequently go into the hills, with sugar and salt, to barter with the natives for the produce of their jungles.

As we penetrate farther into the interior, the shades of barbarism become darker at every step. Clothes, the first sign of civilization, disappear: those who wear them are even regarded with apprehension; and the natives, wild and ferocious as the tigers with whom they dispute the possession of the forests, appear in complete nakedness, both men and women.

[48] Liv. xxxviii. c. 40.

Into these districts, however, no European has ever ventured. Captain Blunt, who, in 1795, made his way, with singular boldness and sagacity, through the more practicable portion of the province, was frequently, during the journey, in imminent danger of being cut off with all his escort. From the description of one of his encounters with these savages, a tolerably exact idea of their inhospitable disposition may be formed. "Having resolved this day," he observes, "to cross the Inderouti, and, if possible, to reach Bhopâlpattan, we commenced our march early. The Brinjarries, who had not been detained without reluctance and evident marks of fear, now supplicated earnestly to be released. I assured them that I would do so, as soon as a guide could be procured, upon which they appeared to be somewhat pacified. I travelled on as usual a little in front; but we had not proceeded far, when one of the Brinjarries informed us, that if the whole party appeared at once, the inhabitants of the village would be alarmed, and would certainly desert their habitations; by which our hopes of getting a guide would be frustrated: that, to prevent this, he would go on in front, with only one man, meanly clad, while the rest of the party should remain a little behind. With this scheme in view, the Brinjarry proceeded; but had scarcely gone a hundred yards from a little hill close on our left, when he perceived a considerable body of men lying in a *nulla*, which ran close under the end of the hill; and, upon advancing, a discharge of about thirty or forty matchlocks, and many arrows, was fired upon us. This made us halt; and having only two Sipahis with me at the time, three or four servants, and the Lascar with my perambulator, I resolved to fall back to my party. Upon our retiring, the Gonds advanced rapidly from the *nulla* and jungle; and a party of them made their appearance

on the top of the hill. At this instant, fortunately, I was joined by a Naik and four Sipahis of my advance, and immediately formed them, priming and loading in a little space of open ground on our right. As soon as the Sipahis had loaded, I would fain have parleyed with the savages before firing; but all my endeavours towards it were ineffectual; and as they continued to rush with impetuosity towards us, with their matches lighted and arrows fixed in their bows, they received the fire of my party at the distance of about twenty yards; when four or five of them instantly dropped. This gave them an immediate check, and they ran off, hallooing and shouting, into the woods, carrying off their killed and wounded, all but one body, and leaving some of their arms, which fell into our possession. The rest of my people having by this time joined me, I directed a party of a Naik and four Sipahis to drive them from the hill: this they soon effected; after which, disposing of the small force I had with me, in such a manner as that it might act to most advantage if again attacked, we moved forward with the hope of reaching Bhopâlpattan that night.

"Nothing worthy of remark occurred until we came to the Inderouti river; where, not being able to find a ford, we were necessitated to encamp on its bank. I was the more vexed at this disappointment, as it prevented our leaving the territory of the Gond chief, whose subjects had treated us with such inhospitality. The village of Jasely, which we had passed, appeared to be deserted; and upon looking into the country around me, I could only perceive about ten huts, which were likewise desolate. As the day closed, I discovered, with my telescope, three or four men with matchlocks, who seemed to be observing us from behind a rock on the opposite side of the river. They hallooed to us in a language which we

could not understand; but the Brinjarries informed us, that they said we should not be allowed to pass the river until they had received orders to that effect from Bhopâlpattan. To this I replied, that we had a pass from the Mahratta government, which I would send for the inspection of their chief next morning. In about an hour after they hallooed again, inquiring whether we came as friends or enemies. I desired the Brinjarries to reply, that we were travellers, who paid for what we wanted, and took no notice of any thing but our road. The sound of *tom-toms* soon after apprized us that the Gonds were collecting, which induced me to dispose of the cattle and their loads in such a manner as we could best defend them, if attacked; but the sound ceasing, and perceiving no approach of the enemy, we laid down to rest, under arms. About midnight, the noise of people paddling through the water, informed us of their approach. They appeared to be crossing the river about a mile above us, and, from the sound, I judged them to be in considerable numbers. I immediately ordered all the lights to be put out, and enjoined a perfect silence. The night was exceedingly dark, which rendered it impossible for the Gonds to see us, or we them, at a greater distance than twenty yards. I sent scouts to observe their motions, with directions to retire before them, should they advance, which they did not, however, attempt; and, after deliberating about half an hour, they went back. Finding the people of the country thus inhospitably inclined towards us, I conceived it would be hazardous to send a messenger to Bhopâlpattan; for, should he be detained, or put to death, we might wait in vain for an answer, until the numbers by which we should be surrounded would effectually cut off our retreat. The Gonds appeared to be in full expectation of our attempting to pass the river, which

they would, no doubt, have resisted; so that the only way to extricate ourselves from the present embarrassing situation, was to retreat as fast as possible by the road we had come. At midnight rain came on, which rendered the road very slippery for our cattle; but the weather clearing up at daybreak, we moved off in perfect silence [49]."

The same author describes, in a subsequent paragraph, another tribe of wild mountaineers, called *Khonds*, to whom even the Gonds are superior in the scale of civilization. He at first, as was natural, confounded them together, from their resemblance in cruelty and ferocity; but afterwards learned, from a Mohammedan officer well acquainted with the various tribes of mountaineers, that they are quite a different race of men. "The Gonds," he said, "are much larger men, and had, in many instances, been made good subjects; but the Khonds are inferior in stature, and so wild, that every attempt which had been made to civilize them had proved ineffectual. I never indeed met with a people who showed less inclination to hold converse of any kind with strangers than these mountaineers in general. This disposition in a great measure frustrated every attempt I made to acquire information of their manners and customs; among which the sacrifice of birds, by suspending them by the tips of their wings to the trees and bushes on each side of the road, and leaving them to perish by degrees, was almost the only peculiar one I could discover. The cause of this cruel practice I never could learn; yet I frequently observed, that although the birds were suspended at a convenient height for travellers to pass under them, the Gonds would never do so, but always took a circuit to avoid them. I once observed a ram suspended by the feet

[49] Narrative of a Route from Chunarghur to Yertnagudum. Asiatic Researches, vol. vii. p. 133—136.

in the same manner. Their food appeared to be the most simple imaginable, consisting chiefly of the roots and produce of their woods. They go for the most part naked; and when pinched by cold, they alleviate it by making fires, for which their forests supply them with abundance of fuel; and when the heat of the sun becomes oppressive, they seek shelter, and recline under the shade of large trees [50]."

[50] Captain Blunt, Asiatic Researches, vol. viii. p. 153.

Chapter XII.

FINE ARTS—USEFUL ARTS—COMMERCE.

The fine arts will never, in any country, attain any very high degree of perfection, unless artists enjoy, in addition to what is termed "encouragement," becoming honour and distinction. Pecuniary rewards, however lavish or extravagant, will never lead to consummate excellence. Avarice and a fine sense of beauty and sublimity seldom dwell together in the same soul. It is a vulgar error to regard the productions of the fine arts as mere objects of luxury, unless we at the same time class among the same objects a beautiful natural landscape, a sky sprinkled with fiery clouds, the heaving ocean, or the indescribable loveliness of woman. Luxury, if it mean anything, signifies the gratification of fantastic wants, wholly unconnected with the rational happiness and enjoyment of an intellectual creature. Art, on the other hand, is employed in spreading calm and contentment through our minds. It is Nature operating by human hands. It is the embodying of those ideas of harmony and grandeur with which the Creator has so bountifully stored our minds. It is, in short, one of the dialects into which Nature has divided the language of the imagination; and we might as well bestow the name of luxury on the impassioned expressions into which the sentiments of ardent energetic minds necessarily project themselves, as on that other mode of revealing the character of the soul adopted by sculptors and painters.

It will readily be conceived, that in a country like India, where despotism, under some of its worst

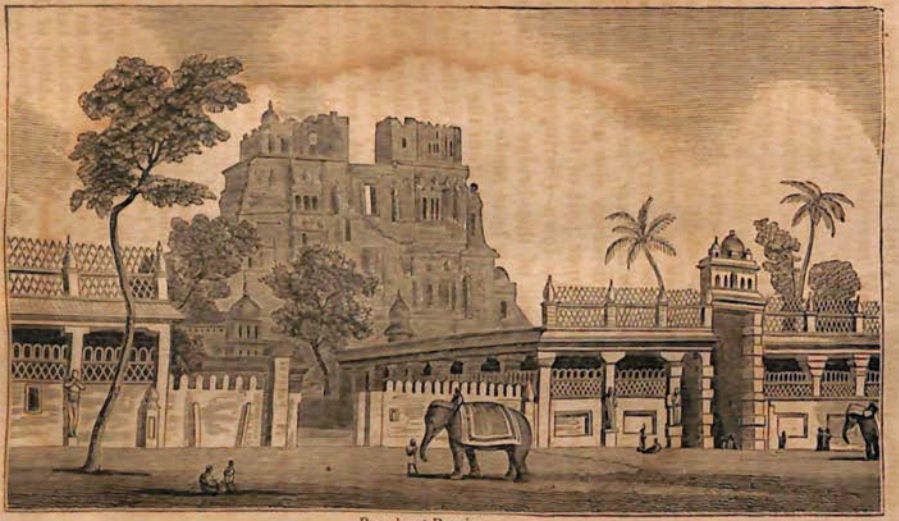
forms, has immemorially prevailed, the fine arts could never have attained to any very high degree of perfection. Why despotism should so prevail is another question; but certain it is, that the degrading subservience to the fantasies of kings, required by such governments, dwarfs and distorts the genius, giving it a form and direction wholly inconsistent with its original nature. Accordingly, both the arts and their professors have always in India been held more or less in contempt. Barbarous soldiers, suddenly elevated to power, could not, from the depth of their ignorance, be expected to admire or properly estimate the creations of genius, which necessarily produce but a feeble effect on their coarse minds. Still less capable must they be of forming a just conception of the importance and value of the artist himself, whom they would probably regard as something inferior to a grenadier. Thus despised and humiliated, the artist, on his part, would sink in his own estimation; and no longer experiencing, or, rather, not being capable of conceiving that soaring spirit of independence and honest pride engendered by free institutions, he would curse and desert his art for the more honourable plough, or, if doomed to toil on in his profession, would give birth to such productions only as a jaded fancy and self-contemned mind would be supposed to bring forth.

This, compendiously, is the general history of the arts in India. We shall presently discover, however, that the causes of mediocrity just enumerated have neither operated universally nor constantly; but the exceptions to the general rule are merely sufficient to show what, under more favourable circumstances, the Hindoos would have been; and that they possess genius, without enjoying those institutions which might invigorate and ripen it. Among the arts earliest cultivated among mankind, architecture

claims, perhaps, the first rank, as its great and obvious utility would necessarily lead to constant and rapid improvements. Yet the Hindoos are supposed by Goguet and Orme to have been, up to a comparatively recent period, ignorant of the art of turning an arch. "It does not appear," says the latter, "that they had ever made a bridge of arches over any of their rivers before the Mohammedans came amongst them [1]." And, in support of this view of the matter, the following description, by Dr. Buchanan, of a bridge over the Cavery, has been quoted: "On the south bank of the river," he says, "a bridge has been erected, which serves also as an aqueduct, to convey from the upper part of the river a large canal of water into the town (Seringapatam) and island. The rudeness of this bridge will show the small progress that the arts have made in the Mysore. Square pillars of granite are cut from the rock, of a sufficient height to rise above the water at the highest floods. These are placed upright in rows, as long as the intended width of the bridge, and distant about ten feet from each other. They are secured at the bottom by being let into the solid rock, and their tops being cut to a level, a long stone is laid upon each row. Above these longitudinal stones others are placed contiguous to each other, and stretching from row to row, in the direction of the length of the bridge [2]."

[1] History of Military Transactions of Hindoostan, vol. i. p. 7. Goguet does not speak of the Hindoos in particular; but observes, that "this secret" (that of turning an arch), "as far as I can find, was unknown to all the people of remote antiquity." Origine des Loix, pt. iii. l. ii. ch. i. tom. v. p. 116. Recent discoveries have, however, made it probable that the art of turning an arch was known in Egypt many centuries before our era: it must also have been known to the architect of the Cloaca of Rome, which was built six or seven centuries B.C.

[2] Journey through the Mysore, &c. vol. i. p. 61.



Pagoda at Ramiseram.

But admitting that the Hindoos were ignorant of what the President Goguet quaintly terms the "secret of turning an arch," it is clear, from an attentive examination of the ruins at Mahabalipuram, that the *idea* of an arch was not unfamiliar to their minds. "There is," says Mr. William Chambers, speaking of those ancient temples, "great symmetry in their form; though that of the pagodas is different from the style of architecture according to which idol temples are now built in that country. The latter resembles the Egyptian; for the towers are always pyramidical, and the gates and roofs flat, and without arches; but these sculptures approach nearer to the Gothic taste, being surmounted by arched roofs or domes, that are not semicircular, but composed of two segments of circles meeting in a point at top[3]." Bishop Heber also remarks that the ceiling of the cavern temples of Kenneri and Karli "is arched semicircularly, and ornamented in a very singular manner with slender ribs of teak-wood, of the same curve with the roof, and disposed as if they were supporting it, which, however, it does not require, nor are they strong enough to answer the purpose[4]." But instances of this kind, although showing that the Hindoos who constructed those ancient temples employed the *form* of an arch in decorating their buildings, still leave it doubtful whether they were acquainted with the mode of constructing a stone self-supporting arch. In the treatise on Hindoo architecture by Râm Râz, recently published under the superintendence of the Royal Asiatic Society, nothing occurs which would warrant an inference that the art of turning an arch was known to the authors of the ancient Sanscrit works, from which that treatise is compiled.

[3] Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 151.

[4] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. iii. p. 94, 114.

Of the sacred and domestic architecture of the Hindoos we have already spoken in a former chapter; for this reason, we shall in this place pursue the subject no further, though it may not be unprofitable or foreign to our purpose to describe somewhat minutely some of the numerous contrivances for passing torrents and rivers to which this people have had recourse. Of these the following is undoubtedly one of the most primitive. "The breadth of the stream" (the Kausila), says Captain Raper, "is twenty-five or thirty yards, and the current very rapid. There being no ford, we were detained for a considerable time in collecting from the neighbouring village large gourds[5], by means of which the passage is effected. Three or four of these are fastened to a string, and tied round the waist of the man who serves as a guide; a string of the same kind is attached to the passenger, to prevent his sinking, in case of accident; but no personal exertions are required on his part, as he has merely to grasp the bandage of the guide, who, being an expert swimmer, conveys him to the opposite shore." Baggage is transported across on men's heads, the number of gourds on which they are sustained being proportioned to the weight of the package[6].

The Alpine bridges in Savoy and Switzerland are safe and commodious compared with the *Sankhos*, or spar-bridges of the Himâlaya. Mr. Moorcroft feelingly describes an accident which occurred, during his return from Tibet, on one of these wretched bridges. "March along the left bank of the Dauli; one of my finest goats, heavy with young, and the boldest in the whole herd, fell into the stream, and was hurried away by the current. The bridge was about twelve inches broad, and formed by a fir-tree,

[5] Cucurbita lagenaria.

[6] Survey of the Ganges. A. R. vol. xi. p. 560, 561.

Hindoo Houses at Calcutta.

a little flattened on its upper surface, and a round sapling on each side. Whilst the goats crowded at the foot of the sankho two went on boldly, but when they had reached within a few feet of the opposite side the pressure of the feet of the goats had pushed forwards one of the side spars, and, unluckily, that on which a goat was; one end fell down, and the other tilting up, threw the poor animal into the stream[7]." Another still more dangerous mode of crossing rivers prevails in the Alpine districts of Northern India. "Over a very rapid but narrow part of the river (Alacananda) was thrown a substitute for a bridge, called, in the language of the country, *tân*. It consists simply of two or three strong ropes, fixed by stakes into the ground on each bank, and elevated about eight or ten feet above the water. On these a person conveys himself across, by clinging to them with his hands and feet, while a small hoop, suspended from the ropes, serves as a rest for the back, and is a trifling, though it must be allowed, a very frail security should the person quit his hold. This passage is not calculated for all descriptions of travellers; the water rolls below with such foaming violence and stunning roar, that it requires no small degree of resolution to make the attempt: however, where the inconvenience is without remedy, the hands and feet of the person are tied above the ropes, his eyes blindfolded, to prevent his seeing the danger, and he is drawn across by a cord passed round the waist[8]." On other parts of the river they substitute for the hoop a small bedstead, in which the traveller is placed, and drawn across by a rope[9].

[7] A Journey to Lake Manasarovara. A. R. vol. xii. p. 505.—Compare Mr. J. B. Fraser's account of his passage over a bridge of similar structure across the Bhagîrat'hi, in his Tour through the Himâlaya Mountains, p. 492.

[8] Survey of the Ganges. A. R. vol. xi. p. 513.

[9] Survey, &c. vol. xi. p. 492.

"There are," says Captain Raper, "several kinds of bridges constructed for the passage of strong currents or rivers, but the most common are the *sangha* and *jhûla*. The former consists of one or two fir spars, thrown from bank to bank, or from one large rock to another; but where the extent is too great to be covered in this mode, they substitute the *jhûla* or rope-bridge, which is made in the following manner: a couple of strong posts are driven into the ground, about three feet asunder, with a cross bar, in the form of a gallows. One of these is erected on each bank of the river, and twelve or fourteen thick ropes, divided equally to both sides, leaving a space of about one foot in the centre, are stretched over the scaffold, and fixed into the ground by means of large wooden piles. These ropes form the support of the bridge, which describes a catenary curve, with the lower part, or periphery, at a greater or less elevation from the water, according to the height of the bank. About two feet below them a rope-ladder is thrown horizontally across, and laced with cords to the upper ropes, which form the parapet when the bridge is completed. The first passage of so unsteady a machine is very apt to produce a sensation of giddiness. The motion of the passengers causes it to swing from one side to the other, while the current (of the Bhagîrat'hî), flowing with immense rapidity below, apparently increases the effect. The steps are composed of small twigs, about two and a half, and sometimes three feet asunder, and are frequently so slender as to give an idea of weakness, which naturally induces a person to place his chief dependence on the supporting ropes or parapets, by keeping them steady under his arms. The passage, however, is so narrow, that if a person is coming from the opposite quarter, it is necessary that one should draw himself entirely to one side to allow the other to pass; a situation very distressing to a novice. The

river at this place is about thirty yards in breadth, and the stream very rapid [10]."

Bishop Heber, who observed the construction of these Alpine bridges in Kemaoon, concludes, with much reason, that it was from them that the original hint of the chain and rope-bridges of Europe and India were originally taken. "At a considerable depth below the houses," he observes, "through a narrow rocky glen, the deep black Causilla runs with much violence, crossed by one of those suspension-bridges of branches and ropes made of grass, which have been, from considerable antiquity, common in these mountains, and appear to have given the original hint both to the chain-bridges of Europe, and those which Mr. Shakespeare has invented. The situation is striking, and the picturesque effect extremely good; but the bridge is at present so much out of repair, (a great many of the branches which compose its road-way being decayed,) that I did not care to trust myself on it, particularly as I could not stand or cling so securely as the bare-footed natives of the country, on broken and detached pieces of wood [11]."

The art of sculpture appears at a very early period to have occupied the Hindoos. In their choice of subjects they were necessarily much influenced by the nature of their religious opinions, which, being in themselves grotesque and absurd, imprinted corresponding features on the art to which they probably gave birth: but there are numerous exceptions; and among these must be reckoned various specimens of ancient sculpture still found in the dilapidated city of Mahâmalaipur, situate near the sea, at a distance of about thirty-five English miles S. of Madras. "The rock, or hill of stone, is that which first en-

[10] Survey of the Ganges. As. Res. vol. xi. p. 475, 476.
[11] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 214, 215.

grosses the attention on approaching the place, for as it rises abruptly out of a level plain of great extent, consists chiefly of one single stone, and is situated very near to the sea-beach, it is such a kind of object as an inquisitive traveller would turn aside to examine. Its shape is also singular and romantic, and, from a distant view, has an appearance like some antique and lofty edifice. On coming near to the foot of the rock, on the north, works of imagery and sculpture crowd so thick upon the eye as might seem to favour the idea of a petrified city, like those that have been fabled in different parts of the world by too credulous travellers[12]." On the smooth faces of the rock are sculptured, some in basso, others in alto relievo, numerous figures of gods and heroes, some indistinct, and defaced by the action of the sea air, others fresh, as if newly executed. As far as can be collected from the accounts of travellers, who have bestowed far too little attention on the subject, the ancient sculptors, who adorned this remarkable city with their labours, were men of undoubted genius, capable, by their productions, of conferring pleasure, not only on their comparatively rude contemporaries, but even on men of refined judgment and taste in the present critical age. Bishop Heber bears a very favourable testimony to the degree of skill displayed in the sculptures of Mahâmalaipur; he observes that the "rocks, which in themselves are pretty and picturesque, are carved out into porticoes, temples, bas-reliefs, &c., on a much smaller scale indeed than Elephanta or Kennery, *but some of them very beautifully executed.* They differ from those of the north and west of India (which are almost all dedicated to Siva or Cali) in being in honour of Vishnu, whose different avatars are repeated over and over in the various

[12] Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 147.

Hindoo Altar, from the original in the British Museum.

temples, while I only saw the solitary lingam, if it be one, which I have mentioned (in the previous page), in the sea, and one unfinished cave, which struck me as intended for a temple of the 'destroying power.' Many of the bas-reliefs are of great spirit and beauty; there is one of an elephant with two young ones, strikingly executed, and the general merit of the work is superior to that of Elephanta, though the size is extremely inferior[13]." The lions, however, which seemed to Mr. William Chambers so finely sculptured, are greatly ridiculed by the bishop, who afterwards observes, "notwithstanding the supposed connection of these ruins with the great Bali, I only saw one bas-relief which has reference to his story, and which has considerable merit. It represents Bali seated on his throne, and apparently shrinking in terror at the moment when Vishnu, dismissing his disguise of a Brahmin dwarf, under which he had asked 'the king of the three worlds' to grant him three paces of his kingdom, appears in his celestial and gigantic form, striding from earth to heaven, and 'wielding all weapons in his countless hands' over the head of the unfortunate Rajah, who, giant as he himself is said to have been, is represented as a mere Lilliputian in the presence of the 'preserving deity[14].'"

[13] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. iii. p. 217. Mr. Goldingham, a competent judge, agrees with Bishop Heber in considering the execution of the lions as very inferior, as well as in bestowing considerable praise on the style in which the bas-reliefs are sculptured. Even in the representation of female beauty the artists of Mahâmalaipur had attained a high degree of skill. "The figure and action of the goddess (Bhavani) are executed," says Mr. Goldingham, "in a masterly and spirited style." Asiatic Researches, vol. v. p. 71.

[14] Narrative, &c. vol. iii. p. 218. Dr. B. G. Babington, in the Essay on the Sculptures at Mahâmalaipur, printed in the second volume of the Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, p. 258—269, observes that Bishop Heber, in his notice of these

We learn, however, from the same authority, that religion, which in Greece gave a character of grandeur and beauty to the productions of art, has in Hindoostan generally failed to produce the same result. "I received to-day," says the Bishop, "an explanation of some very singular images, which stand in different streets of Calcutta and its neighbourhood, representing a female figure, or at least the figure of a youth, rudely carved in wood, and painted, standing erect on the back of a disproportionately little elephant, and with a monstrous sort of spire or shrine on his head. They are used, it appears, as a sort of hatchment, being erected, on the death of wealthy Hindoos, near their dwelling-houses, but, differing in this respect from hatchments, are generally suffered to remain till they fall in pieces. These are of wood. Most of the Hindoo idols are of clay, and very much resemble in composition, colouring, and execution, though of course not in form, the more paltry sort of images which are carried about in England for sale by the Lago di Como people[15]."

But in other instances, the sculptures which adorn the temples of the gods possess, as at Mahâbalipoor, considerable merit. This is particularly the case with the bas-reliefs on the walls of Malicarji's pagoda at Perwuttum, which may be considered in many respects as some of the most extraordinary specimens of art in all India. "The first and lowest row of these stones," says Captain Mackenzie, "is covered

ruins, appears to have chiefly followed the legends of the place, without aiming at any thing more than a record in his journal of his impressions on a cursory visit. To designate the place Mahâ-Bali-pura, the native name at the present day, Dr. Babington considers an error, which has led to the assumption that this was the capital of the giant Mahâ-Bali, whose kingdom, however, ought rather to be looked for on the western coast of India.

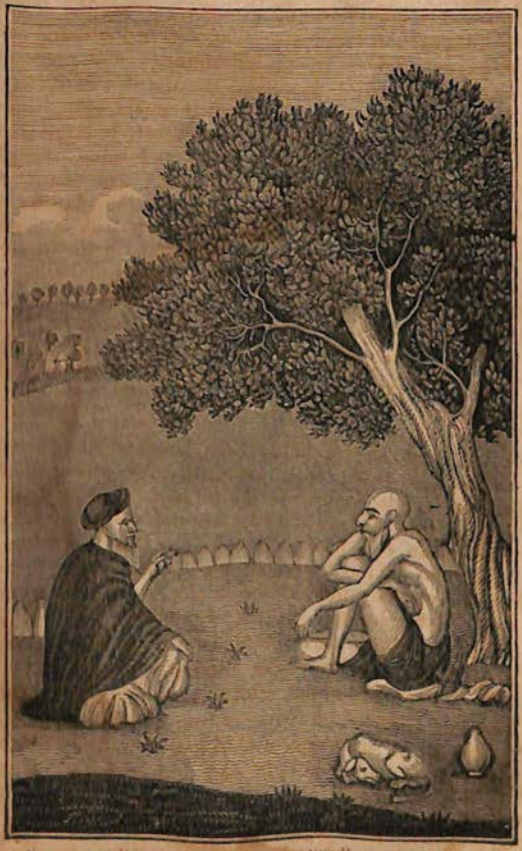
[15] Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 66, 67.

with figures of elephants, harnessed in different ways, as if led in procession, many of them twisting up trees with their trunks. The second row is chiefly occupied with equestrian subjects; horses led ready saddled, and their manes ornamented; others tied up to pillars, some loose; a great many horsemen are represented engaged in fight, at full gallop, and armed with pikes, swords, and shields; others are seen hunting the tiger, and running it through with long spears. The riders are represented very small in proportion to the horses, probably to distinguish the size of the latter, as a smaller cast seems intended to be represented among the led horses, where a few are seen lower in size, something resembling the Acheen breed of horses. All these figures are very accurately designed. It is remarkable, that several figures are represented galloping off as in flight, and at the same time drawing the bow at full stretch: these Parthian figures seem to have entirely dropped the bridle, both hands being occupied by the bow; some of them are seen advancing at full speed, and drawing the bow at the same time. This mode appears to have been practised by the Indians, as it is highly probable that the arts of common life only are here represented in the lower row. On the third row a variety of figures are represented, many of them hunting-pieces; tigers, and in one place a lion, attacked by several persons; crowds of people appear on foot, many armed with bows and arrows, like the Chinsuars; many figures of Virâgis, or Yogis, are seen distinguished by large turbans, carrying their sticks, pots, and bundles, as if coming from a journey; some leaning on a stick, as if tired, or decrepit from age; others approaching with a mien of respect and adoration. The fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh rows are filled (as it would appear from the scanty information I was able to obtain) with

representations of several events regarding the deities of the place, or expressive allegories of the moral and religious dogmas of the Brahmins; and probably some may record particular events of real history. The eighth has fewer carvings than the rest; some stones are occupied by a single flower, of large size, perhaps intended for the lotos; and some, though but a few, by the figure of a god. The ninth, or upper row, is cut into openings, in the manner of battlements; and the stones between each of these apertures are alternately sculptured with the figures of the lingam, and a cow shaded by an umbrella, to signify its preeminence[16]." Mr. Hunter saw at Oojein the images of Râma, Lacshàmana, Sîta, and Râdha, in white marble, and the statue of Krishna, in black, which were all executed with ability.

Painting has probably been less assiduously cultivated in India than sculpture, for which many causes may be assigned; the principal one, no doubt, being, that its productions are much less durable. Forbes, an enlightened lover of the arts, and himself a painter, having bestowed high praise on the architecture of the principal temple at Chandode, observes that "the interior of the dome is forty feet in diameter, the concave painted by artists from Ahmedabad, on subjects in the Hindoo mythology. They are done in distemper, which is very durable in that climate; but the drawing is bad, and the style altogether hard, incorrect, and deficient in the effect of light and shade: a light and dark shade seem indeed to be all they are acquainted with. The modern

[16] Account of the pagoda at Perwuttum, A. R. vol. v. p. 311, 312. See also, in vol. vi. p. 433, the same writer's remarks on the images found in Ceylon. Journey from Agra to Oojein, A. R. vol. vi. p. 40.



Specimen of Hindoo Painting, from a native Picture in the British Museum.—A Yogi and a Brahmin.

artists have no idea of middle tints, or the harmony of colouring. The outline, though greatly inferior in proportion and line of beauty, bears some resemblance to the ancient Greek and Etruscan vases[17]." The same writer remarks, that the harems of Indian princes are frequently decorated with indelicate paintings, but inferior in their execution as they are wretched in taste[18].

Portrait painting seems to have been long fashionable in Hindoostan. Bishop Heber saw, in the house of a wealthy baboo of Benares, of which we have already quoted the description, several well-executed portraits in oil[19]; and Colonel Tod, narrating the history of Sanga Rana, observes, "I possess his portrait, given to me by the present Rana, who has a collection of full-lengths of all his royal ancestors, from Samarsi to himself, of their exact heights, and with every bodily peculiarity, whether of complexion or form. They are valuable for the costume. He has often shown them to me, while illustrating their actions[20]."

Mr. Mill, having quoted numerous authorities to prove the little progress which the Hindoos have made in the art of sculpture, continues, "The progress was similar, as we might presume, in the sister art of painting. The Hindoos copy with great exactness, even from nature. By consequence they draw portraits, both of individuals and of groups, with a minute likeness, but peculiarly devoid of grace and expression. In one remarkable circumstance their painting resembles that of all other nations who have made but a small progress in the arts. They are entirely without a knowledge of perspective; and by consequence of all those finer and nobler parts of

[17] Oriental Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 16.
[18] Ibid. vol. iii. p. 268. [19] Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 377.
[20] Annals of Mewar, p. 307, note.

the art of painting which have perspective for their requisite basis[21]." To this let us add the testimony of Tennant, a hasty presumptuous writer, but one who enjoyed the advantage of seeing what he described. "The laborious exactness with which they imitate," says he, "every feather of a bird, or the smallest fibre on the leaf of a plant, renders them valuable assistants in drawing specimens of natural history; but further than this they cannot advance one step. If your bird is to be placed on a rock, or upon the branch of a tree, the draughtsman is at a stand; the object is not before him, and his imagination can supply nothing[22]."

Speaking of the interior of the palace of Jeypoor, Bishop Heber remarks, that "the ceilings are generally low, and the rooms dark and close; both the walls and ceilings are, however, splendidly carved and painted, and some of the former are entirely composed of small looking-glasses, in fantastic frames of chunam, mixed with talc, which have the appearance of silver, till closely examined. The subjects of the paintings are almost entirely mythological; and their style of colouring, their attitudes, and the general gloomy silence and intricacy of the place, reminded me frequently of Belzoni's model of the Egyptian tomb[23]."

The music of the Hindoos is no less contemptible than their painting, according to the accounts which certain writers have given of it. Tennant, as usual, speaks of it in the most disdainful terms[24]: even Orme declares that "their ideas of music, if we may

[21] History of British India, vol. ii. p. 35, 36.

[22] Indian Recreations, vol. i. p. 299. Sonnerat has taken the same view of the subject, Voy. tom. i. p. 99. Sohas Maudelslo. Harris's Collection, vol. i.

[23] Narrative, vol. ii. p. 404.

[24] Indian Recreations, vol. i. p. 300.

judge from their practice, are barbarous[25]." Sir William Ouseley amuses his readers with a few of the marvellous stories related by the Hindoos of the effects of their ancient music, and of the decline of taste among themselves. "On the subject of those ancient and extraordinary melodies," says he, "which the Hindoos call *râgs* and *râginîs*, the popular traditions are so numerous and romantic as the powers ascribed to them are miraculous. Of the six raugs, the first five owe their origin to the god Mahâdeva (Siva), who produced them from his five heads. Parvati, his wife, constructed the sixth; and the thirty râginîs were composed by Brahma. Thus, of celestial invention, these melodies are of a peculiar genus; and, of the three ancient genera of the Greeks, resemble most the *enharmonic;* the more modern compositions are of that species termed *diatonic.*

"A considerable difficulty is found in setting to music the râgs and râginîs, as our system does not supply notes or signs sufficiently expressive of the almost imperceptible elevations and depressions of the voice in these melodies, of which the time is broken and irregular, the modulations frequent, and very wild. Whatever magic was in the touch when Orpheus swept his lyre, or Timotheus filled his softly-breathing flute, the effects said to have been produced by two of the six râgs are even more extraordinary than any of those ascribed to the modes of the ancients. Mir Tansine, a wonderful musician in the time of the emperor Acbar, sung one of the night râgs at mid-day: the powers of his music were such that it instantly became night; and the darkness extended in a circle round the palace as far as the sound of his voice could be heard. I shall say

[25] History of Military Transactions, vol. i. p. 3.

little on the tradition of Naik Gopâl, another celebrated musician in the reign of Acbar, who was commanded by the emperor to sing the râg *dîpaka*; which, whoever attempted to sing, should be destroyed by fire. The story is long: Naik Gopâl flew to the river Jumna, and plunged himself up to the neck in water, where Acbar determined to prove the power of this râg, compelled the unfortunate musician to sing it, when, notwithstanding his situation in the river, flames burst violently from his body, and consumed him to ashes.

"These, and other anecdotes of the same nature, are related by many of the Hindoos, and implicitly believed by some. The effect produced by the *maigh mullar râg*, was immediate rain: and it is told, that a singing girl once, by exerting the powers of her voice in this râg, drew down from the clouds timely and refreshing showers on the parched rice-crops of Bengal, and thereby averted the horrors of famine from the *paradise of regions*. An European in that country, inquiring after those whose musical performance might produce similar effects, was answered, 'that the art is now almost lost; but that there are still musicians possessed of those wonderful powers in the west of India.' If one inquires in the west, they say, 'that if any such performers remain, they are to be found only in Bengal.'

"Of the present music, and the sensations it excites, one can speak with greater accuracy. Many of the Hindoo melodies possess the plaintive simplicity of the Scotch and Irish, and others a wild originality, pleasing beyond description. Counterpoint seems not to have entered, at any time, into the system of Indian music. It is not alluded to in the manuscript treatises which I have hitherto perused; nor have I discovered that any of our

ingenious orientalists speak of it as being known in Hindoostan [26]."

In Mr. Wilson's translation of a Sanscrit play entitled Mrichchhacati, or 'The Toy-cart,' and supposed to have been written about a century before our era, we find the following beautiful lines on the *vîna*, or Hindoo lute:—

> "Although not ocean-born [27], the tuneful vina
> Is most assuredly a gem of heaven—
> Like a dear friend it cheers the lonely heart,
> And lends new lustre to the social meeting.
> It lulls the pain that absent lovers feel,
> And adds fresh impulse to the glow of passion."

If from these elegant arts we pass on to those which are termed "useful," it will appear that equal diversity of opinion prevails among our most respectable authorities. Some, in their nature cynical and supercilious, seem only to have an eye for the miseries of a country, which they contemplate exclusively, overlooking by a sort of instinct whatever wears a different aspect. Others, again, averse from dwelling on painful scenes, seeking on all sides only such objects as may delight the eye and

[26] Oriental Collections, vol. iii. p. 296—298. Richardson's Dissertation, p. 208—212, has some very curious information respecting the Tartar, Persian, and Arabian music, and the instruments in use among those nations. The resemblance to the Irish music which Sir William Ouseley discovered in the Indian melodies, Marsden also remarked in those of Sumatra. History of Sumatra, 4to. p. 160. For a description of the Hindoo *Vina*, see Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 295—299.

[27] An allusion to the legend of the churning of the ocean by the gods and demons, at which various personages and precious articles, called *ratnas*, or "gems," variously enumerated, were recovered from the deep. See Wilson's Select Specimens of the Theatre of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 59, 60, (2d edit. London, 1835, 8vo.)

cheer the imagination, throw over every thing a sunny glow; and, by the magic of their style, convert, like the landscape painter, the ruined cottage, the deserted field, the mouldering temple, into so many ornaments to the view. Truth has little connection with either. India, containing men in every stage of civilization, presents on its varied surface the arts of life in all their phases; being in some parts wild as the North American woods, in other places totally subdued to the empire of man, and cultivated like a garden.

In Bengal, if there should be rain, the farmer ploughs his ground for rice, for the first time, about the middle of February; and again, with superior care, in March or April, when, if rain have fallen, the ground is weeded. The land is always ploughed three times before sowing. Horses are never employed in agriculture, all the labours of which are performed by cows, bullocks, or oxen[18]. "A Bengal plough is the most simple instrument imaginable: it consists of a crooked piece of wood, sharpened at one end, and covered with a plate of iron, which forms the ploughshare. A wooden handle, about two feet long, is fixed to the other end cross-ways; and in the midst is a long straight piece of wood, or bamboo, called *îsha*, which goes between the bullocks, and falls on the middle of the yoke, to which it hangs by means of a peg, and is tied by a string. The yoke is a neat instrument, and lies over the neck of two bullocks, just before the hump, and has two pegs descending on the side of each bullock's

[18] The Sástra prohibits, under a severe penalty, the employment of cows or bullocks in the labours of agriculture; but its authority is commonly disregarded. It deserves to be noticed that in the hymns of the Rig Veda allusion is occasionally made to the employment of cows or oxen for agricultural purposes. The ancient Sanscrit word *ukshan*, "an ox," properly signifies any animal of burden.

neck, by means of which it is tied with a cord under the throat. There is only one man or boy to each plough, who with one hand holds the plough, and with the other guides the animals, by pulling them this or that way by the tail, and driving them forward with a stick [29]."

Having, about the beginning of May, cast his seed into the ground, the farmer harrows it with an implement resembling a ladder, on which a man stands to press it down. The field is now carefully watched during the day to keep off the birds, sometimes by a woman, as in the case of that Rajpoot's daughter who afterwards became the queen of Rajah Ursi. For this purpose a small stand is erected, in the middle of the field, on four poles, on which the guard, armed with a sling and clay balls, takes his stand, in order to kill or scare away the crows, peacocks, and other depredators of that sort [30]. Should no rain fall during the four or five days which succeed the operation of sowing, and the sun be very hot, the seed is sometimes destroyed, and the ploughing and sowing are repeated.

When the rice has reached the height of about six inches, a piece of wood rough with spikes is drawn over it, in order to prevent its growing too rank, to loosen the earth, and destroy the weeds. The business of weeding commences when the grain is about a foot high [31]. "The corn being nearly ripe, the farmer erects a stage of bamboos in the field, sufficiently high to be a refuge from wild beasts, covers it with thatch, and places a servant there to watch, especially during the night. When a buffalo or a wild hog

[29] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 101.

[30] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 268; Bishop Heber's Narrative, vol. i. p. 269.

[31] Previous to being weeded it is sometimes eaten down by cattle, or sheep. Bishop Heber's Narrative, vol. i. p. 153.

comes into the field, the keeper takes a wisp of lighted straw in one hand, and in the other a dried skin containing broken bricks, pots, &c., bound up on all sides, and in this manner he approaches the animal, shaking his lighted straw, and making a loud noise, on which it immediately runs away."

Harvest usually commences about the middle of August, four months after sowing time. The Bengal sickle resembles that used in England. When reaped, the corn is bound up in sheaves, which are sometimes left two or three days on the ground to dry,—never raised into *mows* as in England,—at others, it is carried home on the day it is cut. Eight persons will reap a *biga* (the third part of an acre) in a day. Their wages are about two-pence sterling, besides tobacco, oil to rub the body, &c. The sheaves are conveyed home on men's heads, or on bullocks. The poor, after harvest, are permitted to glean the fields, as in England.

When brought home, the rice is by some piled up in stacks, while others immediately separate it from the husk with bullocks[32]. In performing this operation, two or more bullocks are fastened together, side by side, and driven round upon a quantity of sheaves spread on the ground, by which means about thirty *maunds*[33] will be trodden out in three hours. The Bengal farmers generally "muzzle the ox in tread-

[32] It has been remarked that rice in the husk, when it is termed *puddi*, will keep for several years; but that, when cleansed, it frequently shows signs of decay in six months. This is particularly the case with the *sawoor*, or "lowland" rice of Sumatra. Even the *laddang*, or "upland" rice will not continue good above twelve months. Marsden, Hist. of Sumatra, p. 71.

[33] The *maund* is equal to 74 pounds and two-thirds in Bengal; 37 pounds and a half at Surat; 28 pounds at Anjengo; and 25 at Madras. Rousseau's Persian Dictionary, *s. v.* Ward makes it 80 pounds, and observes that 320 pounds of rice in the husk are sometimes sold for a rupee! Vol. i. p. 106.

ing out the corn," until the upper sheaves have been reduced to mere straw. The rice is then cleared from the husk by large hand-fans, one person letting the grain fall from his hands, while another winnows it. It is next deposited in granaries, or sent to the corn-merchant. The straw is piled up in stacks for the cattle, the use of hay being unknown. The scythe has not hitherto been introduced into Bengal, where even grass is cut with the sickle.

"In April the farmer sows other lands for his second and principal harvest; at which time, as it is meant to be transplanted, he sows a great quantity of rice in a small space. About the middle of July he ploughs another piece of ground, which, as the rains have set in, is now become as soft as mud, and to this place he transplants the rice which he sowed in April, and which is embanked to retain the water. The rice stands in water more or less during the three following months; if there should be a deficiency of rain after the transplanting, the farmer resorts to watering the field. In November or December he reaps this crop, which is greater or less than the former according to the soil and situation." Water for irrigation is raised from ponds or rivers, in the North by bamboo troughs, in the Dekkan by baskets. Where the land is good, a third crop is sown in January, and reaped in April; and in the Dinajpoor and other districts even a fourth harvest is obtained[34].

In addition to rice, wheat, barley, pulse, mustard, the indigo plant, linseed, turnips, radishes, sugar-canes, ginger, turmeric, tobacco, &c. are cultivated in Bengal. "Trees are rented: a mangoo tree for one rupee annually; a cocoa-nut for eight anas or sixteen-pence; a jack, one rupee; a tamarind, one rupee; a betel-nut, four anas; a lime-tree, four anas.

[34] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 105.

The palms are rented partly for the sake of the liquor which is extracted from them; with the juice of the date, molasses and sugar are made; and the juice of the *tala* is used like yeast. The trunks of some of the tala trees present the appearance of a series of steps, the bark having been cut at intervals from top to bottom, to permit the juice to ooze out. The liquor falls from a stick, driven into the trunk, into a pan suspended from the tree."

"Hindoo kings formerly planted, as acts of merit, as many as a hundred thousand mango trees in one orchard, and gave them to the Brahmins, or to the public[35]." "The orchard is what chiefly contributes to attach the peasant to his native soil. He feels a superstitious predilection for the trees planted by his ancestor, and derives comfort and even profit from their fruit. Orchards of mango trees diversify the plains in every part of Bengal. The delicious fruit, exuberantly borne by them, is a wholesome variety in the diet of the Indian, and affords him gratification and even nourishment. The palmyra abounds in Behar: the juice extracted by wounding its summit becomes, when fermented, an intoxicating beverage, which is eagerly sought by numerous natives, who violate the precepts of both the Hindoo and Mohammedan religions by the use of inebriating liquors[36]."

From Bengal if we pass into the mountainous regions of Rajpootana, we shall find the same ingenuity, the same active industry, the same perseverance. "Nature has been lavish of her beauties to this romantic region, (a valley in the Aravulli mountains). The wild-fig, the custard-apple, the peach, or almond-peach, are indigenous and abundant; the banks of the stream are shaded by withy, while the

[35] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos. vol. i. p. 107.
[36] Remarks on the Husbandry and Internal Commerce of Bengal. View, &c. vol. i. p. 107, 108.

large trees, the useful mango and picturesque tamarind, the sacred peepul and burr, are abundantly scattered, with many others, throughout. Nor has Nature in vain appealed to human industry and ingenuity to second her intents. From the margin of the stream on each side to the mountain's base, they have constructed a series of terraces rising over each other, whence by simple and ingenious methods they raise the waters to irrigate the rich crops of sugar-cane, cotton, and rice, which they cultivate upon them. Here we have a proof that ingenuity is the same, when prompted by necessity, in the Jura or the Aravulli[37]. Wherever soil could be found, or time decomposed these primitive rocks, a barrier was raised. When discovered, should it be in a hollow below, or on the summit of a crag, it is alike greedily seized on: even there water is found, and if you leave the path below and ascend a hundred feet above the terraces, you will discover pools or reservoirs dammed in with massive trees, which serve to irrigate such insulated spots, or as nurseries to the young rice plants. Not unfrequently, their labour is entirely destroyed, and the dykes swept away, by the periodical inundations; for we observed the high-water mark in the trees considerably up the acclivity. The rice crop was abundant, and the *joar*, or maize, was thriving, but scanty; the standard autumnal crop which preceded it, the *makhi*, or 'Indian corn,' had

[37] The part of Switzerland which most resembles this picturesque district of the Aravulli, of which Colonel Tod gives so agreeable a picture, is the southern slope of the *Jorat*, which lies between Lausanne and Vevay. Here, as we walk along the edge of the Leman lake, we observe the terraces rise, as in Rajpootana, one above the other, until they reach the summit, crowned in some places with naked perpendicular rocks, in others with dark groves of pines. Instead of sugar-cane, cotton, and rice, however, the Swiss terraces are covered with vines up to the very banks of the *Veveyse*.

been entirely devoured by the locust. The sugar-cane, by far the most valuable product of this curious region, was very fine, but sparingly cultivated from the dread of this insect, which for the last three years had ravaged the valley. Its natural fertility cannot be better demonstrated than by recording the success of an experiment, which produced *five crops, from the same piece of ground, within thirteen months.* It must, however, be understood that two of these are species of millet, which are cut in six weeks from the time of sowing. A patch of ground, for which the cultivator pays six rupees rent, will produce sugar-cane six hundred rupees in value [38]."

Mr. Mill observes that "nothing can exceed the rudeness and inefficiency of the Hindoo implements of agriculture [39];" and Dr. Tennant, who had resided in India, humorously informs us that "you frequently see a field, after one ploughing, appear as green as before; only a few scratches are perceptible, here and there, more resembling the digging of a mole than the work of a plough [40]." However, among the Hindoo implements of husbandry, Ward enumerates "a very excellent instrument in the form of a hoe, with a handle about two feet and a half long, and the iron as wide and as strong as a spade, called a *kuddalu*, which answers the purpose of a spade and hoe." And we find that the "scratching," of which Dr.

[38] Colonel Tod, Personal Narrative, vol. i. p. 666, 667.

[39] Hist. of Brit. India, vol. ii. p. 22.

[40] Indian Recreations, vol. ii. p. 78. It is not true, as some writers suppose, that the Hindoos never manure their lands; in Canara leaves are strewed over the fields and ploughed up; in Nagpoor (where the mode of ploughing answers Dr. Tennant's description), they use manure to a great amount, particularly in the cultivation of sugar, the betel leaf, and tobacco. For this purpose the dung of sheep and other animals is used. In the culture of cotton the ground is manured with wood-ashes. Rept. 1830, p. 117, 211, 322.

Tennant speaks, is sufficient to cover a large portion of India with the richest harvests in the world. It is well known that the Malay artizan executes the finest gold filigree with very rude tools[41]; and we shall presently see the Hindoo weaver allowed to produce, with the most imperfect apparatus, fabrics of unequalled fineness and beauty. Perhaps a similar disparity between the instruments and the effect may be found in Hindoo agriculture; but if the simplicity of his plough neither entails upon the native farmer additional labour, nor a more scanty harvest, nor an increased expenditure, we do not see that he is much to be pitied.

Before we join Dr. Tennant in ridiculing the agricultural processes which obtain in India, though they might doubtless be improved, we will therefore examine their results. "In that delightful part of Hindoostan (Guzerat) are no 'antres vast, or deserts idle,' all is fertility and plenty; the soil, generally rich and loamy, produces valuable harvests of *batti*, *juarri*, *bajeri*, and other grain, with cotton, shrubs for oil, and plants for dyeing. Many parts yield a double crop, particularly the rice and cotton fields, which are both planted at the commencement of the rainy season, in June. The former is sown in furrows, and reaped in about three months; the cotton shrub, which grows to the height of three or four feet, and in verdure resembles the currant-bush, requires a longer time to bring its delicate produce to perfection. They are planted between the rows of rice, but do not impede its growth, or prevent its being reaped[42]. Soon after the rice harvest is over, the cotton bushes put forth a beautiful yellow flower,

[41] Marsden, Hist. of Sumatra, p. 143—147.

[42] In the same manner potatoes are now planted in Burgundy between the vines, particularly on the north-eastern slopes of the Cote d'Or.

with a crimson eye in each petal; this is succeeded by a green pod filled with a white stringy pulp; the pod turns brown and hard as it ripens, and then separates into two or three divisions containing the cotton. A luxuriant field, exhibiting at the same time the expanding blossom, the bursting capsule, and the snowy flakes of ripe cotton, is one of the most beautiful objects in the agriculture of Hindoostan." "The hedges, frequently shaded by large mango and tamarind trees, are formed by different kinds of euphorbia, and a variety of bushes, shrubs, and creeping plants, in the rainy season profusely covered with blossoms of every mingled hue, which they more or less preserve through a few succeeding months. Their early fragrance is delicious; the nightly dews, impregnated by the odours, exhale their short-lived sweets, and render a morning walk delightful[48]."

Respecting the state of agriculture in Malabar some curious facts are mentioned by Mr. Baber, in his evidence before the Committee of the House of Lords: they would seem to establish an exception to the current opinion, that where estates are divided into very small portions agriculture generally does not prosper, and the peasantry are poor and wretched. "Will you state by what classes of people Malabar is inhabited? By Hindoos and Mohammedans, and a great many Christians. I can give the average of the number. The different classes of the Hindoos, I apprehend, are about four-fifths of the whole population, the Mohammedans nearly one-fifth. There are about 10,000 Christians altogether in Malabar, and about 50,000 in Canara.—Are the properties of any considerable extent? They are divided and subdivided. There are estates so small as to produce hardly a rupee a-year, *palom* or 'rent;' on the other

[48] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 405—411.

hand, there are estates which produce perhaps from 5,000 to 10,000 rupees. *Some individuals* possess from ten to one hundred estates; the Zamorin Rajah, for instance: his domains (crown lands) probably bring him a revenue of from 20,000 to 50,000 rupees a-year.—Is the country well cultivated? *Highly; a garden from one end of it to the other*[44]."

From agriculture we proceed to the other useful arts, among which weaving is that which, in Hindoostan, has been carried to the highest degree of perfection. The *sindon byssina* mentioned by Herodotus (ii. c. 16; vii. c. 181) was probably either fine linen or cotton, or perhaps a mixture of the two: the name points at the Indian origin of the article; for *sindon* is clearly a derivation of the name of the river Sindhu or Indus. It was used for binding wounds in the Persian fleet, and for swathing mummies in Egypt. The cloth wrapped around mummies has been found to be cotton. The cotton-plant was known to Herodotus as indigenous in India (iii. c. 106; vii. c. 65).

The Indian loom, though much more simple and imperfect, is in substance the same as the English. The frame is laid almost on the ground, in which a hole is cut to receive the feet of the weaver while at work. Women of all castes are engaged in the preparation of the cotton-thread. The finest muslins are manufactured at Dacca, Shantipoor, Sonarga, and Vicrampoor, where the price of a single piece, which occupies the weaver four months, sometimes amounts to four or five hundred rupees. When this muslin is laid on the grass, and the

[44] Testimony of Mr. Baber. Report from the Lords, July 8th, 1830, p. 196, 197. So that the Hindoo, with his rude implements of husbandry, contrives, we see, whether on a large or small estate, to raise his country to the highest possible state of cultivation, at least in many places.

dew has fallen upon it, it is no longer discernible. Tavernier relates that the ambassador of Shah Sefi, on his return from India, presented his master with a cocoa-nut, set with jewels, containing a muslin turban, sixty covits, or thirty English yards, in length, so exquisitely fine that it could scarcely be felt by the touch. Mr. Mill, in treating of this part of his subject, observes that "whatever may have been the attainments in this art, of other nations of antiquity, the Egyptians, for example, whose fine linen was so eminently prized, the manufacture of no modern nation can, in delicacy and fineness, vie with the textures of Hindoostan[45]."

One of the causes of the superiority of Indian muslin over English is distinctly brought forward in the following passage from the Report from the Lords. "Do you know what kind of cotton the finest Indian muslins are made of? I should consider the common cotton of the country, the short-stapled cotton grown in Bengal; but the whole of the manufacture in India is by hand-spinning, consequently there is a greater tension, from the moisture which the hand gives them, than can be had from anything in the shape of machinery; a fine yarn can be produced by hand-spinning from a short staple which frame-spinning will not touch at all[46]."—The cotton from which these fine muslins are woven grows in the district of Dacca, within twenty miles of the sea, the vicinity of which is supposed to be necessary to the fineness of cotton[47]. Still superior to this is the cotton of Surat, though the fine Dacca muslin, which we have been totally unable to equal in England, is manufactured in Bengal[48]. "India," says Milburne, "maintains her superiority in the finer kinds of muslins, some of

[45] History of British India, vol. ii. p. 14, 15.
[46] Report from the Lords, July 8, 1830, p. 316.
[47] Idem. p. 343.
[48] Report, &c. p. 259.

which are of most exquisite beauty and fineness. The common kinds are also preferred, on the score of enduring great hardships, and retaining their whiteness better; and in respect to the coloured or prohibited goods, for the foreign markets, they will always retain their superiority. In the article of Guinea stuffs manufactured at Surat, and in request on the coast of Africa, many attempts have been made to imitate them, particularly by the French, but in vain. The Moors discover merely by the touch whether they have been manufactured in Europe or India; nor is it even to their feel and colour that they chiefly trust; they ascertain by their smell, as the indigo with which they are dyed gives them a peculiar smell which cannot be imitated[48]."

"The cotton manufactures of India seem anciently to have been as much admired as they are at present, not only for their delicate texture, but for the elegance with which some of them are embroidered, and the beautiful colour of the flowers with which others are adorned. From the earliest period of European intercourse with India, that country has been distinguished for the number and excellence of the substances for dyeing various colours, with which it abounded[49]. The dye of the deep blue colour, in highest estimation among the Romans, bore the name of *Indicum*[50]. From India, too, the substance used in dyeing a bright red colour seems to have been imported; and it is well known that both in the cotton and silk stuffs which we now receive from India, the blue and the red are the colours of most conspicuous lustre and beauty[51]."

[48] Oriental Commerce, p. 297.
[49] Strabo, lib. xv. c. 1, p. 694, ed. Casaub.
[50] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxxv. c. 6, § 27.
[51] Robertson, Dissertation, &c., App. § 4.

Among the inferior tradesmen of India, the *Napitas*, or "barbers," claim a distinguished place, as, like their ancient brethren of Europe, they unite a certain knowledge of pharmacy with the art and mystery of shaving. No Hindoo, even of the poorest class, ever shaves himself, or cuts his own nails; and there are numbers who disdain even to clean their own ears, which operation falls to the lot of the barbers, who may be seen in the street, seeking employment, with an instrument like a skewer, covered at one end with cotton, in their hands. The rich are usually shaved daily, the middling ranks once a week, the poor once in a fortnight. The operation is generally performed in the street, or under a tree, and the operator receives for his pains, from the poor a farthing, and from the rich double that sum. The wives of the barbers, who in France both shave and cut hair, are condemned in India to operate on their own sex only, for whom they cut the nails of both fingers and toes, and stain the feet and hands with *henna*.

The *confectioners* of India make and vend nearly a hundred sorts of sweetmeats, principally composed of sugar, molasses, flour, and spices, no fruit, excepting the cocoa-nut, being ever used in these delicacies, which are in great request among the Hindoos. Children are permitted to indulge their taste for sweetmeats to the injury of their health; and their parents, with tastes little less crude, likewise devour immense quantities of them at their weddings, religious festivals, &c. Next to these rank the *potters*. The employments of this caste are numerous and varied; for besides manufacturing earthenware of different kinds, they plaster houses with clay, make bricks, tiles, spouts, balustrades, together with those little images, which, having been worshipped during certain days, are cast into the pools or rivers. Toys,

also, as birds, horses, gods, coaches, and elephants, which are painted and gilt, are the work of the potter.

Blacksmiths are by no means numerous in India, there seldom being more than two or three families of this caste in the most populous villages, while in other districts six or eight villages possess but one Vulcan between them. Add to this that, unless when under the superintendence of an European, the Hindoo blacksmith, at least in Bengal, is an unskilful workman; which may partly be accounted for from his being what is vulgarly termed "a jack of all trades," as he makes arrows, bill-hooks, the *kuddala*, or spade-hoe, the axe, the farmer's weeding knife, the ploughshare, the sickle, the hook to lift up the corn while the oxen are treading it out; besides nails, locks, keys, knives, chains, scissors, razors, cooking utensils, builder's and joiner's tools, instruments of war, &c.

Among the Hindoo castes there is one which we shall give some account of, in the hope that we may thereby excite a generous emulation among the sovereigns of Europe for the honour of introducing it in the West. These people are denominated *Mâgadhas*, and their business is, to awake the king in the morning, by telling him what o'clock it is, by repeating the names of the gods, reciting lucky omens, dwelling on the beauties of the morning, and the evils of sloth. When his majesty undertakes a journey, these officious gentlemen run before, to announce his approach to the towns and villages through which he is to pass, perhaps from the humane intention of giving them notice to guard against the evil propensities and griping fingers of his followers.

Flower-sellers are found in great number in Hindoostan. It is a part of their business to make wedding crowns, together with the lamps and artificial

flowers which are carried in marriage processions. They likewise work in gardens, and manufacture gunpowder and fire-works. Hindoo *joiners* were formerly a very rude and ignorant race, possessing no knowledge of the rule, compass, or gimlet, or, indeed, of more than ten of those implements which compose a joiner's chest of tools; but they are now richer in tools, and more skilful in the use of them. They make idols, bedsteads, window-frames, doors, boxes, seats, pillars for houses, delineate the figures of idols on boards, paint images, and sometimes engage in masonry.

The *Rajakas*, or "washermen," are a numerous caste. They were ignorant, until recently, of the use of soap, and to this day make use of a wash composed of cow's urine, the ashes of the plantain, or of the *argemone mexicana*. The linen, having been steeped in the wash, and boiled, is dipped repeatedly in water, and then beaten with a heavy mallet on a board, which is generally placed by the side of a pool or river. And this method, though somewhat adverse to the duration of linen, renders it much whiter than our own. The members of this caste enjoy the reputation of being consummate thieves.

The *Suvarnakâras*, or "goldsmiths," who are little less celebrated than the washermen for their their thievish propensities, seem to be more dexterous in the art of stealing than in the mystery of their proper profession[52]. However, as gold and silver

[52] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 135. But Bishop Heber, who looked on the Hindoos with more unprejudiced eyes, allows the gold and silversmith of India considerably more merit. "The silversmiths of Kutch and Katty-wár emboss very neatly, by filling the cup, watch-case, box, or other vessel, with gum-lac, and punching it in, to the figure required, with a small chisel. Major Sale showed me a watch-case and small tankard, very prettily ornamented in this manner, with flowers, elephants, and different birds and animals." Narrative, &c. vol. iii. p. 50.

ornaments are much worn by the Hindoos of both sexes, whether young or old, this is a flourishing caste. In the money-changers, oilmen, milkmen, fishermen, &c. of India, we discover nothing very remarkable. Distillers, though they employ a rude apparatus, produce excellent arrack, which enable many castes to enjoy the delights of intoxication, to whom this indulgence is not lawful.

Few castes of Hindoos are more despised than the *Shoe-makers*, principally because they work up the skin of the cow, and may thus be suspected of indirectly encouraging the slaughter of that sacred animal. However, though despised, and not allowed to get drunk, they are excellent workmen, and will make a pair of shoes for four-pence; but for a good pair, which will last two years, they demand eighteen-pence. In the upper parts of India they make several kinds of gilt and ornamented shoes, like those worn by the Grecian courtezans, which sell in Bengal for from three to forty rupees. These merry sons of Crispin are likewise employed as musicians at weddings, feasts, and religious ceremonies; which, in the opinion of Ward, accounts in a great measure for the horrid din which on those occasions stuns the ear of an European.

The Hindoo *Druggists* are a respectable class of people, who are visited even by Brahmins, when these holy men condescend even to eat sweetmeats in their houses. It is true they are rich, and to please their guests employ Brahmin cooks on these occasions.

The *Brass-founders*, though not wealthy, are in what may be termed "easy circumstances," and are not destitute of knowledge.

Shell-ornament-makers are numerous in Calcutta, where the women sometimes wear six or eight rings of shells on each wrist. In some parts of the country all the lower part of the arm is covered with them.

These trinkets, like the gold and silver ornaments possessed by the peasants of France, sometimes become a kind of heir-loom in the family, and descend from mother to daughter to the third or fourth generation[53].

We must not here omit to mention a trade which is of very ancient standing among mankind, and has produced many illustrious examples of skill and success. We mean the caste of *Kalaris*, or "robbers," who exercise their profession, not in the sneaking manner common among their brethren in Europe, but without disguise, as their birthright. Though evidently widely spread in more ancient times, this caste is now but rarely found beyond the Marava, a territory bordering on the fishing coast. "The princes of this little state belong to the tribe and profession of robbers, and conceive their calling no way discreditable to themselves or their tribe, as having legitimately descended to them by right of inheritance. So far from shrinking at the appellation, if one of them be asked who he is, he will coolly answer that he is a robber. Indeed the tribe is counted one of the most distinguished among the Sudras, in the province of Madura, where it flourishes[54]."

The above account of the artizans of India, founded, it must be owned, on prejudiced and suspicious authorities, (for we possess no others, on the subject, in detail,) may, perhaps, be correct, if understood of the common mass of Hindoo tradesmen. But it is clear that there are very numerous exceptions. Those who describe the natives as ignorantly wedded to their customs and practices, as doting on the wisdom of their ancestors, as shutting their eyes against the light which has begun to dawn upon them

[53] Ward, View, &c. vol. i. p. 98—142.
[54] Dubois, Description, &c. 4to. p. 3.

from Europe, may be confidently pronounced to be more prejudiced and narrow-minded than the Hindoos themselves. "To say," says Bishop Heber, in a passage which we have already quoted in part, "that the Hindoos or Musulmans are deficient in any essential feature of a civilized people, is an assertion which I can scarcely suppose to be made by any who have lived with them. Their manners are at least as pleasing and courteous as those of the corresponding stations of life among ourselves; their houses are larger, and, according to their wants and climate, to the full as convenient as ours; their architecture is at least as elegant. *Nor is it true that in the mechanic arts they are inferior to the general run of European nations.* Where they fall short of us (which is chiefly in agricultural implements and the mechanics of common life), they are not, so far as I have understood of Italy and the South of France, surpassed in any great degree by the people of those countries. Their goldsmiths and weavers produce as beautiful fabrics as our own, and it is so far from true that they are obstinately wedded to their old patterns, that they show an anxiety to imitate our models, and do imitate them very successfully. The ships built by native artists at Bombay are notoriously as good as any which sail from London or Liverpool. The carriages and gigs which they supply at Calcutta are as handsome, though not as durable, as those of Long Acre. In the little town of Monghir, 300 miles from Calcutta, I had pistols, double-barrelled guns, and different pieces of cabinet-work brought down to my boat for sale, which in outward form (for I know no further) nobody could detect to be of Hindoo origin[55]."

[55] Narrative, &c. vol. iii. p. 351,352. The opinion of the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone is no less favourable to the Hindoos, though he considers them greatly deficient, com-

It would be wholly foreign to the purpose of this work, to enter into any detailed account of the commerce of India, to describe which would require a separate treatise; but from the following sketch of the trade of Bombay an idea may be formed of the commercial operations of the other great parts of India. "Bombay was then (a few years ago) one of the first marts in India, and employed a great number of vessels in its extensive commerce; Bussorah, Muscat, Ormuz, and other ports in the Persian Gulf, furnished its merchants with pearls, raw silk, Haronania wool, dates, dried fruits, rose-water, attar of roses, and several other productions. Arabia supplied them with coffee, gold, drugs, and honey. A number of ships, annually freighted with cotton and bullion to China, returned laden with tea, sugar, porcelain, wrought silks, nankeens, and a variety of useful and ornamental articles. From Java, Malacca, Sumatra, and the eastern islands, they brought spices, ambergris, perfumes, arrack, and sugar; the cargoes from Madagascar, the Comorro isles, Mosambique, and other parts on the eastern coast of Africa, consisted chiefly of ivory, slaves, and drugs; while the different parts of India produced cotton, silk, muslin, pearls, diamonds, and every precious gem; together with ivory, sandal-wood, pepper, cupia, cinnamon, and other luxuries. This valuable commerce was carried on by vessels belonging to the European and native merchants settled at Bombay, totally independent and unconnected with the trade of the East India Company. The exports consisted of English woollen cloths of every description, with copper, iron, lead, and other European staples, purchased at the Company's sales by the native merchants, both at Bombay and from the continent. A

pared with Englishmen, in the higher branches of education. Report from the Lords, 1830, p. 156—174.

great deal of cotton, imported in boats from Surat, Baroche, Ahmood, and Jamboseer, was shipped in large vessels at Bombay for Madras, Bengal, and China[56]."

[56] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 153, 154. For the History of Indian Commerce, see Vincent's Periplus of the Erythræan Sea; Heeren's Ideen über den Handel und die Politik, &c.; Robertson's Disquisition, *passim*; and for the details, Milburne's Oriental Commerce, p. 106—308. See also Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 369.

Chapter XIII.

AMUSEMENTS.

We have already, on more than one occasion, incidentally described a portion of the amusements of the Hindoos. Our account of them in this place will therefore be the shorter. It is commonly asserted, and currently believed, that the inhabitant of India is an indolent, inactive, effeminate being, who believes that it is better to sit still than to walk, better to lie down than to sit, and better to be dead than alive. To account for this extreme apathy, in the existence of which we are supposed to believe, the eternal argument of climate, which appears to suit equally well with every sort of hypothesis, and the extreme delicacy of their physical structure, are complacently brought forward. Under certain circumstances the Hindoo unquestionably exhibits remarkable apathy, or, at best, acts as if he felt not; but it does not therefore follow that he is indolent and inactive. On the contrary, the general characteristic of the nation, contemplated on a grand scale, is a certain restless activity, impatience of rest, romantic contempt of the ordinary plodding routine of life, and inordinate, insatiable ambition. What but this sends forth daily from their homes such mighty shoals of pilgrims, who, to gratify their passion for excitement, cheerfully encounter hardship in all its forms, with thirst, hunger, danger, and "the thousand ills which flesh is heir to?" In the history of what nation do we find a greater

number of daring, energetic, persevering military adventurers[1]? Where shall we seek for merchants of more enterprise, grasp, and capacity? for bolder, more desperate hunters? And, lastly, when the force of their souls is directed into an evil channel, for wilder, more ferocious, more ingenious, or more adventurous banditti? There must doubtless, in the Hindoo character, exist some original defect, some fatal bias, which has hitherto lain too deep to be approached by our researches, since despotism, either foreign or domestic, has, in all ages, flourished in the land. Perhaps ignorance may be this defect; ignorance of the science of politics, which consists not in the contemptible jargon of courts and diplomatists, but in a correct knowledge of man, and of those grand processes by which his permanent well-being may be secured. But scarcely is the theory of this science comprehended, even in Europe; and were it possible that the thorough knowledge of it could be introduced into the mind without that courage, patriotism, heroism, and the other virtues which should accompany it, still it would be but a glittering ornament adorning the intellect of a slave.

But we are digressing from our subject.—The modes in which various nations contrive to fill up the intervals of business, are among the most curious

[1] We do not quite comprehend Mr. Orme when he tells us that the Hindoo "shudders at the sight of blood, and is of a pusillanimity only to be excused and accounted for by the great delicacy of his configuration, which," says he, "is so slight, as to give him no chance of opposing with success the onset of an inhabitant of more northern regions." Dissertation on the Establishments of the Mohammedans, &c. vol. i. p. 5, 6. The Rajpoots, however, are scarcely excelled in bravery by any soldiers, and the Mahrattas, according to his own history, exhibited during the wars of the Dekkan remarkable prowess and valour, vol. i. p. 40, 361. In fact, the whole history of India is replete with heroic deeds, which show Orme's view of the native character to be quite erroneous.

portions of their manners, since it is here that their character, left entirely to itself, manifests its natural bias unequivocally. We have already, when speaking of the education of youth, remarked the strong predilection for warlike exercises exhibited by Hindoo boys, who enact, on their tiny play-ground, an imperfect imitation of those deeds which, when arrived within the pale of manhood, they chiefly delight in performing. We have likewise described the jugglers, dancing-girls, story-tellers, &c., who practise their various arts for their diversion. At present, therefore, we have only to speak of those species of amusements in which they themselves engage, in order to unbend their minds, lest a too unremitting application to serious and important concerns should induce an untimely rigidity of intellect.

One of the favourite amusements of the Hindoos is the *game of Chess*, which they are, by many writers, supposed to have invented[1]. That this is a sedentary amusement there can be no doubt; but man cannot be always in action, and must, in many instances, prefer even less exciting contrivances than chess to calm the perturbation of his mind. The Chinese, a far less martial people than the Hindoos, consider chess as the "image of war[2];" and it appears probable that whatever people invented this game were, at the period of its invention, a race of soldiers, desirous of carrying the representation of their profession even into their very recreations.

But the Hindoos do not, unfortunately, confine themselves to this scientific game. Gambling, the vice of half-cultivated and ill-cultivated minds, impatient of tranquillity, but incapable of striking out for themselves any laudable system of action, has, in all

[1] Sir William Jones, Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 159, 160.
[2] Capt. Hiram Cox, Asiatic Researches, vol. vii. p. 489. *Choke-choo-hong-ki*—literally, "the play of the science of war."

ages, been numbered among their besetting sins. This, also, according to Tacitus[4], was a strong feature in the manners of the barbarians of ancient Germany; and it were to be wished that their descendants in Great Britain, who pride themselves upon their civilization, had at this day relinquished a vice supposed to belong almost exclusively to demi-savages. Among the Rajpoots religion even consecrates the passion for play at games of chance; and once a year, on the "Festival of Lamps," all propitiate the goddess of Wealth by offering at her shrine. "Destitute of mental pursuits, the martial Rajpoot is often slothful or attached to sensual pleasures, and when roused, reckless on what he may wreak a fit of energy. Yet, when order and discipline prevail in a wealthy chieftainship, there is much of that patriarchal mode of life, with its amusements, alike suited to the Rajpoot, the Geta of the Jihoon, or the Scandinavian[5]."

Bishop Heber, who has helped to destroy so many other erroneous opinions respecting the Hindoos, describes them as a lively, gay, active race. "On passing a banyan-tree," he observes, "where were an old mat and a pitcher, one of them (the boat's crew) ran forwards without giving any notice of his intentions, drew the mat round his loins, placed the potsherd by his side according to rule, and so ridiculously imitated the gestures of a Yogi, singing all the time in the dismal tune which they use, putting his hands over his head, sprinkling earth over his face, &c., that his comrades were quite disabled from their work with laughing, and I was myself exceedingly amused. Indeed, not having seen him run forwards, I really at first supposed him to be the person whom he counterfeited, and wondered at the irreverent

[4] Germania, c. 24.

[5] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 50, 71, 179.

mockery with which so holy a man was treated, till in a few minutes he sprang up, threw his mat and handful of ashes at his comrades, and catching up his truncheon of bamboo, resumed his place in the team with an agility and strength which urged all the rest into a round trot. This is only one out of twenty instances which every day offers of the vivacity of these fellows, who are in fact always chattering, singing, laughing, or playing each other tricks. Yet I have met many people in Calcutta who gravely complain of the apathy and want of vivacity in the natives of India. My own observation, both of these men, and of the peasants and fishermen whom we pass, is of a very different character. They are active, lively, gossiping, and laborious enough when they have any motive to stimulate them to exertion[6]."

The Hindoos likewise divert themselves during the festival of the *Hooli*, when hilarity and mirth pervade every class of society, in making what, among the common people in England, are termed "April fools," by sending persons on errands and expeditions that end in disappointment and raise a laugh against them[7]. Not dissimilar in spirit are the diversions of a Hindoo country fair. "Deosa, or 'divine,' is a rather large town, built on one side of a square table-like hill, with a sharp peak adjoining to it. From its name it should seem to possess a sacred character, and even now we found a considerable encampment of merchants and pilgrims, with flying chairs, swings, and other symptoms of a Hindoo fair or festival. It turned out to be one which I cannot find in the Calcutta Almanac, but which they here call 'Pusund,' and it was celebrated in the course of the day with a degree of glitter and show which I did not

[6] Narrative, &c. vol. i. p. 176.
[7] Oriental Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 75.

expect in a place apparently so poor and ruinous. Two little images of a male and female, called, I think, Gungwala and Gungwali, were carried, wrapped up in a piece of kincob, in a very gaudy gilded rutt, drawn by the people to an open tent pitched without the town. A good deal of drumming and singing followed, and the ceremony ended by pelting each other with red powder, as during the *Hooli*. Meantime the usual traffic and diversions of a country fair went on; cakes, cloth of different kinds, and coarse trinkets, were exposed in considerable abundance, and a good many of the people whom we met in the afternoon had evidently been drinking or taking opium[8]."

But it is not at all surprising that the Hindoos are addicted to the above kinds of amusements, which, requiring but little physical energy, are not unsuited to persons of effeminate habits and delicate forms. We shall therefore no longer insist upon their tranquil pleasures, which, in description, are far less amusing than such as are nearly allied to danger, and tasted, as it were, in its lap. Such are those of the chase. Barbarians, we are informed, have been in all ages strongly actuated by a passion for hunting, which seems to have been thence regarded as a savage pastime, adapted only to brutal natures, and calculated, in the midst of peace, to keep up in the breasts of those devoted to its fierce delights the appetite for bloodshed and war. For those who derive enjoyment from the chase of half-tame, and, as it were, civilized animals, like the hare or the deer, little more respect can be entertained than for a troop of boys running down a wretched dog or cat with a saucepan tied to its tail; but in countries where the wild beasts of the field, existing in a state of independence, not only dispute man's empire over

[8] Bishop Heber, Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 390, 391.

the land, but by destroying, or at least circumscribing, the energies of the peasant, actually impede the progress of agriculture, and consequently of civilization, there hunting is an amusement worthy of men, and to those who possess youth, health, and leisure, becomes almost a duty. And this is precisely the case in Hindoostan.

Accordingly, we find the Hindoos, from time immemorial, passionate admirers of field sports; but they by no means confine their attacks to the larger or fiercer animals, which are the only game truly noble. In Sacontala we find the king in pursuit of a deer or fawn; and the Rajpoot, who is fond of his dog and his gun, pursues indiscriminately the hare, the deer, and the boar. "The greater chieftains have their *rumnas*, or 'preserves,' where poaching would be summarily punished, and where the slaughter of all kinds of beasts, elk, hog, hyæna, tiger, boar, deer, wild-dog, wolf, or hare, is indiscriminate[9]." The description of the grand boar-hunt, which, in Rajpootana, forms a part of the spring festival, will exhibit the "timid and pusillanimous Hindoo," in rather a new light. "The merry month of Phalgun is ushered in with the *Ahairea*, or spring-hunt. The preceding day the Rana distributes to all his chiefs and servants either a dress of green, or some portion thereof, in which all appear habited on the morrow, whenever the astrologer has fixed the hour for sallying forth to slay the boar to *Gaurî*, the Ceres of the Rajpoots; the *Ahairea* is therefore called the *Muhûrt ka shikâr*, or the 'chase fixed astrologically.' As their success on this occasion is ominous of future good, no means are neglected to secure it, either by scouts previously discovering the lair, or the desperate efforts of the hunters to kill the boar when roused. With the sovereign and his sons all the

[9] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 645.

chiefs sally forth, each on his best steed, and all animated by the desire to surpass each other in acts of prowess and dexterity. It is very rare that in some one of the passes or recesses of the valley the hog is not found; the spot is then surrounded by the hunters, whose vociferations soon start the *dhokra*, and frequently a drove of hogs. Then each cavalier impels his steed, and with lance or sword, regardless of rock, ravine, or tree, presses on the bristly foe, whose knowledge of the country is of no avail when thus circumvented, and the ground soon reeks with gore, in which not unfrequently is mixed that of horse or rider. On the last occasion there occurred fewer casualties than usual; though the Choudawut Hamîra, whom we named the 'Red Riever,' had his leg broken, and the second son of Sheodan Singh, a near relation of the Rana, had his neighbour's lance driven through his arm. The young chief of Saloombra was among the distinguished of this day's sport. It would appal even an English fox-hunter to see the Rajpoots driving their steeds at full speed, bounding like the antelope over every barrier,—the thick jungle covert, or rocky steep, bare of soil or vegetation,—with their lances balanced in the air, or leaning on the saddle-bow, slashing at the boar[10]."

In most parts of India there is fine cover for game of every species, but particularly in those sublime wild districts which border on the western Ghauts. Here, amidst stupendous heights, narrow glens, dark woods, and impenetrable jungles, is found the jungle-fowl, or cock of the woods, supposed to be the domestic fowl in its wild state, together with tigers,

[10] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 566. For the comparatively tame sports of the Chinese and Chinese Tatars, see the lives of Marco Polo and Bell of Antermony, in Lives of celebrated Travellers, vol. i. and ii.

hyænas, hogs, deer, and porcupines[11]. "Many natives of the Concan are keen sportsmen, and form hunting parties with dogs, nothing in appearance like our sporting, but resembling the common Parhia, dog, except that a few have long hair on the tail and ears. Each man is armed with a stick of hard wood, called *burbur*, which grows in the jungles; the tree bends inwards towards the root, and instead of cutting they break it off, so as to bring away part of the root to form a head; with this weapon they are admirably dexterous, killing quails, partridges, and pigeons flying; hares running, and breaking the legs of the fleetest deer. A set of these men killed, in this manner, three hares and several quails in less than an hour. Observing one of the party in a small glen by himself, very intent upon some object, we imagined he saw a hare; on approaching the spot, he warned us by a sign to come on softly, pointing to the root of a milk bush; he then quickened his pace, took up a large stone, and, suddenly dropping it on a partridge, instantly killed it, with no small degree of exultation[12]."

This mode of killing wild animals, which resembles the practices of the natives of Van Dieman's Land, is, however, seldom resorted to for amusement, being in fact a very serious occupation, intended to increase the means of subsistence. Antelopes are also eaten when killed, both by Mohammedan and Hindoo sportsmen; but in pursuing the animal, in seeing him falter, pant, and fall, in terror and agony, beneath the paw of the *cheeta*, consists the diversion. Men of a certain cast delight in inflicting pain, in witnessing the throes of Nature, and the working of that instinctive reluctance to enter the gate of death,

[11] On the scenery of the Ghauts, see Anquetil Duperron, Zendavesta, Discours Préliminaire, tom. i. p. 218.

[12] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 197.

Peacock Shooting.

which every living creature experiences and exhibits under certain circumstances. The movements of terror, the convulsive shudderings of anguish, the desperate efforts to escape from the sting of pain, the heaving of the chest, the writhings which follow when that sting has entered into their souls, and is sending its thrilling influence to the root of every feeling; all these things, we say, are matter of amusement to the genuine sportsman, who looks on with heartfelt delicious triumph at the rueful struggles of his game, and while its very heartstrings are breaking with indescribable suffering, pats the head of his four-footed ally, or smiles with proud satisfaction at his manly achievement.

The princes and chieftains of Hindoostan, both Mohammedan and Hindoo, delight, as we have said, in the diversion of hunting, which those, says Abul Fazl, who look into consequences discover to be of real utility. This was possibly meant as an apology for his master Akbar, who was "exceedingly fond of this sport." However, the account given in the Ayeen Akbery of the different modes of hunting which were practised by the emperor and the court of Delhi, though apparently applicable only to the field sports of the Mogols, will suit equally well those of the native Hindoo princes, from whom the former appear to have borrowed them. The hunting of the lion was conducted in many various ways. In some cases they made a large wooden cage, strengthened with clamps of iron, in which a kid was placed as a bait. If the lion entered, the door, like that of the enchanted cave in the Arabian Tale, closed behind him, and he was taken alive; or a bow, fastened in a tree, was set off by the animal's passing under it, and sent an arrow into its heart. On other occasions, a sheep was placed in some spot frequented by the lion, and a considerable quantity

of straw, worked up with some glutinous substance, was piled up round it. The lion, heedless of the snare, rushing on his prey, became entangled in the straw, and was easily taken or killed. "Sometimes a bold resolute fellow seats himself on the back of a male buffalo, and makes him attack the lion, and toss him with his horns till he kills him. It is not possible for any one who has not seen this sight to form an adequate idea of the sport it affords, or to conceive the boldness of the man, who seats himself erect like a pillar, notwithstanding the violent motions of the buffalo during the bloody conflict." An anecdote or two are then related of Akbar, which are curious in two respects; first, as illustrating the personal courage of the monarch; secondly, as showing the proneness of even the most respectable courtiers to grovelling adulation. "Once on a hunting-party, advice being brought that a lion had made his appearance in a thicket near a town, his majesty went in quest of him. The lion struck his claws into the forehead of his majesty's elephant, and pinned him to the ground, till the king put the lion to death, to the astonishment of every spectator. Another time, being hunting near Toodah, a lion seized one of his train, when he smote the beast with an arrow, and delivered the man from his clutches. Another time a lion had seized a foot-soldier, and every one despaired of his life; but his majesty set him free by killing the lion with a matchlock. On another occasion, in the wilds, a lion moved towards him in such a terrible rage, that Shujâ'at-Khân, who had advanced before his majesty, lost his resolution; but the king stood firm, holding the lion at defiance, when the animal, through instinct, becoming frightened at the sight of Heaven's favourite, turned about to escape, but was speedily killed by an arrow. But it is impos-

sible for me, in my barbarous Hindoo dialect, to describe, in fit terms, the actions of this inimitable monarch[13]!" Falstaff, we see, had grave authority for asserting that the lion is a coward upon instinct, and will not touch the true prince.

The leopard, like the African elephant, is sometimes taken in pits covered over with grass, but it does not appear that in India sharp stakes are fixed up in these pits to impale the creatures which fall into them[14], though it frequently happens that they break a limb or are greatly bruised. Akbar invented a kind of trap-door, which let the animal down, and immediately closed upon it. In this way, during rutting time, a female and four male leopards have been taken at once. They are also caught by snares suspended by iron rings from the trees under which they commonly resort, where they entangle themselves in the springs as they rub against the trunk, or sport about for their amusement. These animals, which in Persian are denominated *yuz*, are perhaps the *cheeta* of the Coromandel coast; for, like it, they were easily tamed, and taught to employ their destructive powers for the sport of man. The imperial cheeta establishment was magnificent. Each animal was provided with carriages, horses, and *dhoolies*, or litters, with two attendants, whose business consisted in waiting on them. There were allowed for these leopards coverings of rich brocade, and collars and chains of gold, inlaid with precious stones, with silk and woollen carpets. The establishment was under the superintendence of a great emir. A name was bestowed on each leopard, and the whole was formed into divisions of ten, to each of which a different rank

[13] Ayeen Akbery, vol. i. p. 234—236.

[14] As is the case in Africa. Le Vaillant himself was near falling a victim to this barbarous contrivance. Lives of celebrated Travellers, vol. iii.

was assigned. When the emperor proceeded to the chase he was accompanied by a thousand leopards, which alone formed a large encampment. Some were slung in small panniers on the backs of elephants, that they might descry the game from afar; others were borne on the backs of horses or mules, and others were transported in carriages or in dhoolies carried by bearers. *Semendmanik*, the chief leopard of Akbar, was carried to the field in a *chowdole*, or palanquin, and was treated, says Abul Fazl, with great respect, having a kettle-drum beat before him, and servants appointed to attend him when he travelled[15]. From a feeling not greatly dissimilar, Caligula made his horse a consul.

It has been observed that each cheeta, or leopard, has his hunting carriage, which by the Hindoos is termed *reynkla*, and by the English *hackery*. "On this cart, which is drawn by oxen, he leaps, from custom, without hesitation; he is then hooded, and his keeper, sitting by him, secures him by a string through his collar on the neck. In this manner he is conveyed to the scene of action, having a belt round his loins, the use of which will be hereafter explained. Antelopes are very common in the northern parts of Guzerat, and there is seldom any doubt of sport. When the game is descried the sportsmen generally leave their horses and attendants and get on hackeries, like that of the cheeta, as being less likely to alarm the antelopes; all the followers on foot likewise keep close behind the hackeries; for, exclusive of the circumstance of frightening the game, the cheeta himself is apt to be alarmed, when carried out to hunt, by a crowd, which he might disregard in the town; and so strongly has instinct implanted in him the fear of man, and the consciousness of his being obnoxious to him, that should a person appear

[15] Ayeen Akbery, vol. i. p. 240.

at a distance in a line with the game he will scarce ever run.

"Every sportsman being thus mounted on his vehicle, they proceed in pursuit of the antelopes, and the subsequent manœuvres depend upon the nature of the country; if it is woody, or a forest scenery, the cheeta may be unhooded at any distance, for the astonishing sagacity of the animal curbing his impulse to run, on first getting sight he leaps carefully off the cart, and creeps on with the greatest cunning from bush to bush, narrowly observing the game and most artfully avoiding discovery. If by these means he can get within the distance of about seventy yards, he rushes forth at full speed, and seldom misses. This method is by far the most entertaining, as it discovers the animal in every point of view, and shows the extent and turn of his force and genius.

"If the cheeta finds that he cannot proceed undiscovered, or if he perceives the game to be alarmed, he crouches and lies close to the ground; thus posted, the hackeries take a circuit, leaving the cheeta, and getting on the other side of the antelopes; and then, edging down, urge them towards the ambuscade, which if they pass within the distance of seventy or eighty yards there is every reason to expect success.

"A third method is in a bare and open country, where we are frequently obliged to follow the game some time before we can get within distance; in which case the huntsman studiously avoids getting to windward; and endeavours by traversing to force the antelopes to run across him, at which time the cheeta is most likely to follow them; for although he may be previously within distance, he generally hesitates, even when unhooded, to quit his cart if the game is standing still or looking towards him when he has no cover to conceal himself. But sometimes,

with every advantage of distance, the cheeta will not run, and in this respect, so trying to an eager sportsman, he is very inferior to the dog, who never fails to do his utmost. When the cheeta resolves to exert himself his velocity is astonishing; for although the antelope is esteemed the swiftest species of the deer, and the course generally begins at the distance of seventy or eighty yards, yet the game is usually caught, or else makes his escape, within the space of three or four hundred yards; the cheeta seldom running a greater distance, and in that I have measured repeated strokes of seven paces. On coming up with the game, especially if a doe or a fawn, it is difficult to describe the celerity with which it overthrows its prey. But the attack of an old buck is a more arduous task; his great strength sometimes enables him to make a hard struggle, though seldom with success; for, although I have known a buck to get loose two or three times, yet I never saw one escape after having been fairly seized.

"The cheeta, on overtaking the deer, by a most powerful and dexterous use of its paw, overthrows it and in the same instant seizes it by the throat; when, if it is young, or a doe, as already observed, it does not quit its hold until respiration ceases; but if it is a buck, whose neck is very thick and powerful, he is obliged to be more cautious, and to avoid in the struggle not only a blow from the horns, which, from the mere convulsive motion of terror and agony, might be very dangerous, but from the hoofs, whose sharpness renders them equally so. The deer thus seized by the throat loses all capacity of struggling, and in the interim the cheeta-keeper comes up, and instantly cuts the throat of the animal. The cheeta, finding the animal dead, would immediately commence the work of laceration, which he generally begins between the hinder legs, but is prevented by

his keeper, who either catches the blood from his throat in a ladle kept for that purpose and presents to him to lap, or nimbly cuts off the last joint of the leg, and putting it into his mouth, leaves him employed with it, and quickly carries off the game, to be secured behind the hackery. The cheeta having amused himself with his ladle or bone, his keeper leads him to the cart, which he ascends without taking any further notice of the game, though tied close under his nose.

"This is the mode generally practised when we intend to pursue our sport, and I have killed four antelopes in one morning; but when it is the intention to proceed no farther, the cheeta has a handsome share of the deer last killed. It sometimes happens that the cheeta is thrown out, and misses his prey; he then lies down, and the keeper drives the hackery to him; disappointment sometimes sours his temper, and he shows signs of anger; but I never saw them attended with any danger. The keeper, after soothing him a little, takes him by the collars round his neck and waist, and conducts him to the cart, on which he readily leaps. I have heard of accidents happening on those occasions, but I never saw one, or a likelihood of one, though I always made a point of being near the animal, both after seizing and missing. One of my cheetas having frequently disappointed me by refusing to run, I resolved to keep him without food until he killed for himself; but although I had him out every day in sight of game, he forced me to keep my resolution until the eighth day, when he ran with surprising velocity, and killed a black buck, though he had not eaten anything during the whole time[16]".

It has been remarked that the cheeta hunts best against the wind, as he thus discovers the game by

[16] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 273—276.

the scent, while at the same time the deer he pursues will not discover him. Before the time of Akbar it was not customary to let the animal loose in the evening, lest he should become intractable, or make his escape into the woods; but the careful training which was then put in practice enabled the sportsman to dispense with this precaution, as well as with that of hooding; as the leopard, thus educated, would hunt by night as well as by day, and remain perfectly quiet with his eyes open. Hares, foxes, and antelopes are hunted with the *siyâh-gûsh*. Dogs from Câbulistan, especially those from the districts of Hezereh and Tesheen, are held in high estimation. Deer are likewise hunted with deer. In this kind of chase a snare is fastened about a tame deer in such a manner that, when a wild deer attempts to engage with him, he is entangled by the horns, and thus secured until the hunters come up and seize him. If the tame animal is worsted he returns to his keeper, obeys his orders, and comes or goes just as he directs. Sometimes a man with a lamp, covered by a shield or basket in his hand, proceeds by night into the woods, ringing a small bell with his other hand as he moves. The game, running towards the sound and the light, are shot with arrows by concealed sportsmen. On other occasions a very extraordinary method is practised: a man, having stripped himself stark naked, in this condition shows himself to the deer, before whom he performs so many foolish actions that the animals, taking him for a madman, approach and stare at him with astonishment, while the archers from their coverts shoot them with arrows[17].

Among the larger game of the Indian sportsmen, one of those animals most dangerous in the attack, though not most difficult in pursuit, is the wild buf-

[17] Ayeen Akbery, vol. i. p. 242, 243.

falo. To destroy them the natives of Malabar, especially the Nairs, form large hunting parties, consisting frequently of several hundred persons, all armed with strong spears and large bows and arrows. Having assembled on the field of action, and formed a circle round the thickets frequented by the wild beasts, they raise a loud shout to rouse them from cover, "and drive them towards the centre; then, gradually contracting the circle, they unite in an armed phalanx and fall upon their prey, of which very few escape; but they sometimes wound each other in their furious onset, and often sustain dreadful attacks from their enraged foe [18]."

The reader will, perhaps, excuse a slight digression from the subject of this chapter, made with the design of showing the graceful timid antelope on a more friendly footing with man than it has appeared in the foregoing pages. "The Peshwa (a Brahmin prince), having invited me to a novel spectacle at his *rumna*, or park, about four miles from Poonah, I proceeded thither about two o'clock in the afternoon, with the gentlemen of my party; where we found a tent pitched for the purpose, and were received at the door by some of the principal nobles. The Peshwa arrived soon after, and when we were all conveniently seated on carpets, agreeably to oriental custom, four black buck-antelopes, of noble mien and elegant form, made their appearance at some distance, moving gracefully before a party of cavalry, who, forming a semicircle, gently followed their pace, each horseman holding a long pole with a red cloth at the end. On their approaching the tent a band of music struck up in loud notes, and three of the antelopes entered in a

[18] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 354. The mode of hunting this animal described by Abul Fazl, as prevailing among the Musulmans, is much less sportsmanlike than that of the Nairs. Ayeen Akbery, vol. i. p. 214.

stately manner. Two swings, commonly used by the Indians, being suspended for the purpose, an antelope ascended on each swing, and couched in the most graceful attitude; the third reclined on the carpet in a similar posture. On the loud music ceasing, a set of dancing-grils entered, and danced to softer strains before the antelopes; who, chewing the cud, lay in a state of sweet tranquillity and satisfaction. At this time the fourth antelope, who had hitherto appeared more shy than his comrades, came into the tent and laid himself upon the carpet in the same manner. An attendant then put one of the swings in motion, and swung the antelope for some time without his being at all disturbed. The amusement having continued as long as the Peshwa thought proper, it was closed by the gamekeeper's placing a garland of flowers over the horns of the principal antelope, on which he rose and the four animals went off together[19]." To this state of extreme docility and familiarity the Peshwa asserted they had been brought by music. In support of the opinion that this animal is greatly susceptible of the influence of musical sounds, Sir William Jones observes: "I have been assured, by a credible eye-witness, that two wild antelopes used often to come from their woods to the place where a more savage beast, Suraja Daulah, entertained himself with concerts, and that they listened to the strains with an appearance of pleasure, until the monster, in whose soul there was no music, shot one of them to display his archery[20]."

Descriptions of tiger-hunts occur in various travellers, some drawn up from actual observation, others from hearsay. Among others, the lamented and accomplished Heber has left us an interesting account[21]: but as the hunt which he witnessed was

[19] Sir Charles Malet, Oriental Mem. vol. ii. p. 481. 4to.
[20] Asiatic Researches. [21] Narrative, &c. vol. ii. p. 167—175.

accompanied by little of that barbaric pomp which our countrymen in the East are fond of exhibiting, we on this occasion prefer another authority. "The preparations for the business of the day were numerous. Tents were despatched on the preceding evening, and an encampment was formed near the jungle which was to be the scene of action, and where the reeds and long rank grass were in many places fifteen feet high. Thirty elephants, with the servants and necessary refreshments, set out at an hour after midnight; at two o'clock the sportsmen followed in fly-palanquins, and having reached the encampment and taken a short repose, proceeded about six o'clock in the morning towards the jungle. Various kinds of game, such as hares, antelopes, hog-deer, wild boars, and wild buffaloes, were discovered on the way, hovering about their several coverts; but the excitement promised by the chase of the royal tiger would not suffer them to linger a moment. With the appearance of the grey dawn the sportsmen, all mounted on elephants, formed themselves into a line of great extent and entered the jungle. For some minutes no game was discovered, but the eye of the huntsman, as it searched the gloom of the thicket, lighted on a tiger's lair, in which were the half-devoured carcass of some large animal, two human skulls, with a heap of bones, some bleached, others still red with gore! They had not proceeded many hundred yards before the cry of *Bâg! Bâg!*—'The tiger! the tiger!'—re-echoed along the line. On the spot where a single tiger had been pointed out, on the discharge of the first gun, a scene presented itself which the most experienced tiger-hunters then present declared to be the most striking they had ever seen. Five full-grown royal tigers sprang together from the same spot, where they had sat in bloody congress. Each took a diffe-

rent path, but running heavily they again couched in new covers within the same jungle, and were all marked. The hunters now formed in a crescent, whose horns embraced both extremities of the jungle; the state-elephants, with the marksmen and the ladies occupying the centre. When we had slowly and warily approached the spot where the first tiger lay, he moved not until we were just upon him; when, with a roar that resembled thunder, he rushed upon us. The elephants wheeled round at once; and (for it is not to be described by any quadruped-motion we know of, I must therefore coin a term for the occasion) shuffled off. They returned, however, after a flight of about fifty yards, and, as they again approached the spot where the tiger had lodged himself, towards the skirts of the jungle, he once more rushed forth, and, springing at the side of an elephant upon which three of the natives were mounted, at one stroke tore a portion of the pad from under them, and one of the riders, panic-struck, fell off. The tiger, however, seeing his enemies in force, returned, slow and indignant, into his shelter; where, the place he lay in being marked, a heavy and well-directed fire was poured in by the principal marksmen; when, pushing in, we saw him in the struggle of death, and, growling and foaming, he expired.

"We then proceeded to seek the others, having first distinguished the spot by pitching a tall spear, and tying to the end of it the muslin of a turban. We roused the other three in close succession, and, with little variation of circumstances, killed them all; the oldest and most ferocious of the family had, however, early in the conflict, very sensibly quitted the scene of action and escaped to another part of the country. When the fate of the last and largest was depending, more shots were fired than in the three other attacks; he escaped four several assaults, and,

taking post in different parts of the jungle, rushed upon us, at each wound he received, with a kindled rage, and as often put the whole line to flight. In his last pursuit he singled out the elephant upon which Lady Day (the wife of the narrator) was; and was at its tail, with jaws distended, and in the act of rising upon his hind paws to fasten on her, when fortunately she cleared the jungle; and a general discharge from the hunters having forced him to give up the chase, he returned to his shelter. The danger, I believe, was not very great; but it was sufficient, when she shall be again invited, to make her say, with Lord Chesterfield, when they attempted to allure him to a second fox-hunt, '*I have been.*'

"The chase being over, we returned in triumph to our encampment, and were followed by the spoils of the morning, and by an accumulating multitude of the peasants from the circumjacent villages, who pressed round an open tent, in which we sat at breakfast, with gratulations, blessings, and thanksgiving. The four tigers were laid in front; the natives viewed them with terror, and some with tears. There was one very affecting incident. An old woman, looking earnestly at the largest tiger, and pointing at times to his tusks, and at times lifting his fore-paws, and, viewing his talons, her furrows bathed in tears, in broken and moaning tones narrated something to a little circle composed of three Brahmins and a young woman with a child in her arms. No human misery could pierce the phlegm and apathy of the Brahmins, and *with them* there was not a feature softened, but horror and sorrow were alternately painted in the face of the female; and, from her clasping at times her child more closely to her breast, I guessed the subject of the old woman's story, and upon inquiry I found that I was right in my conjecture. She was widowed and childless; she owed both her misfor-

tunes to the tigers of that jungle, and most probably to those which then lay dead before her; for they, it was believed, had recently carried off her husband and her two sons, grown up to manhood, and now she wanted food; in the frenzy of her grief she alternately described her loss to the crowd, and, in a wild scream, demanded her husband and her children from the tigers [22]."

In such districts hunting may be dignified with a higher name than *amusement;* it is an imperative duty for all those who possess the necessary courage and leisure. It is therefore to be regretted that it has not yet become fashionable among the "country gentlemen," who so ferociously protect their privilege of running down foxes and hares in England, to go over for a few months to hunt the tiger in India. They would there be in little danger of lacking game.

The Rajpoot, who challenges so distinguished a notice from the contemplator of Hindoo society, like the knights of the middle ages, is eminently partial to the military exercises of tilts and tournaments. The lance, during these mimic combats, is deprived of its spike, and has the point guarded. Occasionally, some hardy combatant will undertake with the sword to defend himself against an adversary armed with the blunted spear; and in all these exercises, with every variety of "noble horsemanship," they are said to be so expert, that the most skilful soldier in Europe would quickly fall an easy prey to their superior address. Like the Swiss, they greatly delight in firing at a mark, in which they consequently attain remark-

[22] Letter from Sir John Day to Sir William Jones, Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 489—493. For an account of the mode of hunting wild elephants, which is by no means undertaken as an amusement, see the very interesting memoir of Mr. Corse, inserted in the third volume of the Asiatic Researches, p. 266—291.

able accuracy of aim. Throwing the dart or javelin on horseback, in much the same manner as the Bedouins and Mamluks, is likewise one of their favourite amusements. He also delights in the use of the bow, which, in Rajpootana, as in ancient Ithaca, requires both dexterity and strength; since the Rajpoot is not content unless he can bury his arrow in the earthen target or in the buffalo to the feather. To accustom him to the sight of blood, as well as to the habit of spilling it, the youthful Rajpoot is instructed, before he has strength to wield a sword, to practise with his boyish scimitar on the heads of lambs and kids. His first success in the chase is a source of joy to his whole family. Thus is the martial spirit kindled and maintained in his mind; since every thing around him, even to his very amusements, and the dance and the song which enliven his home, breathes of arms and strife.

The Rajpoot likewise amuses himself with the performances of wrestlers, of whom every prince or chief entertains a certain number. The *silâh-khâneh*, or "armoury," constitutes another source of amusement to the Rajpoot prince, who there passes whole hours in viewing and arranging his arms. Upon every favourite weapon, whether sword, matchlock, spear, dagger, or bow, some peculiar name or distinctive epithet is bestowed; a practice in which the Hindoos were imitated by their Mogol conquerors. The keeper of the armoury is an officer of great trust. "These arms are beautiful and costly. The *sirohi*, or slightly curved blade, is formed like that of Damascus, and is the greatest favourite of all the variety of sabres throughout Rajpootana. The long cut-and-thrust, like the *Andrea Ferrara*, is not uncommon; nor the *khanda*, or double-edged sword. The matchlocks, both of Lahore and the country, are often highly finished, and inlaid with mother-of-pearl and

gold: those of Coondî are the best. The shield of the rhinoceros' hide offers the best resistance, and is often ornamented with animals, beautifully painted, and enamelled in gold and silver. The bow is of buffalo horn and the arrows of reed, and barbed in a variety of fashions—as the crescent, the trident, the snake's tongue, and other fanciful forms[23]."

We have already spoken, in the words of Sir William Ouseley, of the science of music among the Hindoos. Persons will judge differently in these matters, as much from their accidental differences of taste, as from their greater or less degree of capacity to feel and appreciate music in general; but whatever our opinion respecting the merit of Hindoo music may or should be, they contrive; there can be no doubt, to extract an agreeable amusement from its performance; and though we should decide that they therein exhibit no better taste than they do in initiating their children in bloodshed by cutting off sheep's heads, it is still our business to learn the nature of their practice.

For this purpose we can follow no better guide than Colonel Tod, who seems on this, as on many other occasions, to have possessed the uncommon intrepidity which enables a man, in much disputed matters, to judge for himself. "The Mahârâjah," he observes, "had, attached to his suite, the first vocalists of Mewâr, and occasionally favoured me by letting them sing at my house. The chief *cantatrice* had a superb voice, a *contr'alto* of great extent, and bore the familiar appellation of Catalani. Her execution of all the *bussunt*, or 'spring-songs,' and the *mŏgh*, or 'cloud-songs' of the monsoon, which are full of melody, was perfect. But she had a rival in a

[23] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 646. Travellers in Nubia have found shields of rhinoceros' hide among the natives inhabiting the districts near the Second Cataract.

singer from Oojein, and we made a point of having them together, that emulation might excite to excellence. The chieftain of Saloombra, the chief of the Suktawuts, and others, frequently joined these parties, as well as the Mahârâjah; for all are partial to the dance and the song, during which conversation flows unrestrained. Sedoola, whose execution on the guitar would have secured applause even at the Philharmonic, commanded mute attention when he played a *tan*, or symphony, or when, taking any of the simple *tuppas* of Oojein as a theme, he wandered through a succession of voluntaries. In summer, these little parties were held on the terrace or house-top, where carpets were spread under an awning, while the cool breeze of the lake gave life after the exhaustion of a day passed under 96° of Fahrenheit. The subjects of their songs are various—love, glory, satire, &c. I was invited to similar assemblies by many of the chiefs; though none were so intellectual as those of the Mahârâjah. On birth-days, or other festivals, the chief *bardai* often appears, or the bard of any other tribe who happens to be present. Then all is mute attention, broken only by the emphatic 'wah! wah!' the measured nod of the head, or fierce curl of the mustaches, in token of approbation or the reverse[24]."

The Mahârâjah, thus distinguished by his taste for music and his intellectual pursuits, might, in other respects, be selected as a model of Rajpoot chivalry. Like Waterton, who, in the wild pages of his 'Wanderings,' amuses his readers with a description of his riding on the back of a cayman, the Rajpoot prince was fond of recounting how he swam from island to island in the lake of Oodipoor, mounted upon an alligator. In the wantonness of his confidence he had placed a mark on his son's head, and

[24] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 647.

hit it successfully. "He could kill an eagle on the wing, and divide a ball on the edge of a knife, the knife itself unseen:" such was his boast in the presence of the English political agent. On observing in the countenance of the latter some tokens of incredulity, "he insisted on redeeming his word. A day was accordingly appointed, and though labouring under an ague, he came with his favourite matchlocks. The more dangerous experiment was desisted from, and he commenced by dividing the ball on the knife; this he placed perpendicularly in the centre of an earthen vessel filled with water, and taking his station at about twenty paces, perforated the centre of the vessel, and allowed you to take up the fragments of the ball; having previously permitted you to load the piece and examine the vessel, which he did not once approach himself. Another exhibition was striking an orange from a pole without perforating it. Again he gave the option of loading to a bystander, and retreating a dozen paces, he knocked the orange off, untouched by the ball, which, according to a preliminary proviso, could not be found: the orange was not even discoloured by the powder[25]."

Among the amusements of the Hindoos must be enumerated cock and quail-fighting, with which, by description, at least, most persons must be familiar. It is not, however, so commonly known that the Hindoos of Bengal train the Indian nightingale to fight. In this sport, those who train the *bulbul* hold

[25] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 648. Such feats as those above described are said to be common enough among the Swiss riflemen; who, if practice will produce skill, should be adepts in these matters, since they are the only subjects which appear seriously to occupy their minds. You cannot stir out in the neighbourhood of any of their towns or villages without being stunned by the perpetual report of rifles: even as we write these sentences the eternal din is ringing in our ears.

one bird opposite the other by a string sufficiently long to allow him to fly at and peck his adversary. But this bird, commonly translated "nightingale," though distinguished for its pretty wild notes, differs in many respects from our queen of the woods, whose plaintive sweetness and rich variety of song it by no means possesses [26].

In closing our concise description of the amusements of the Hindoos, we shall introduce, from the pen of an anonymous, though evidently a competent and well-informed witness, an account of a Bengal *nautch*, or "fête." Of this kind of entertainment different ideas have been formed by different travellers, according as their own notions and manners have been more or less stoically severe; some regarding it, apparently without cause, as a mere licentious exhibition of dancing-girls, while others, disappointed perhaps at not finding it such, have found it eminently uninteresting. But whether it be calculated or not to amuse an European company, one thing appears to be certain, which is, that the "unchangeable manners" of the inflexible Hindoos are nearly, if not quite, as changeable as our own; that they imitate their European rulers, and have a deep-rooted, increasing taste for the manufactures and luxuries of England. "Those who have been residing in Calcutta for the last twenty years, and have witnessed all the grand nautches that have been given by the rich native gentlemen in and near the city, will, I think, readily allow that a very considerable improvement has taken place in the usefulness and elegance of the houses and furniture. Every year has produced some house more elegantly fitted up than the last; but of all the houses that have yet been seen, I think that of Baboo Proukissan Holdar,

[26] Oriental Collections, vol. i.; Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 50,

at Chinsura, now open, will be allowed to be the most splendid. This house, which is situated on the bank of the river, is built entirely in the European fashion, and the proprietor has spared no expense in fitting it up in the most superb manner. I received an invitation to his nautch, which began yesterday (Oct. 6), and will continue to the 20th; and being on the river, I went the first night, and was much gratified. On entering the large saloon, about seventy-five feet long by forty wide, I was struck by the magnificence of the furniture and the beauty of the Brussels carpet, the most superb lustres, girandoles, &c. which cast a brilliancy on the whole, that formed a *coup-d'œil* scarcely to be equalled. Other rooms were prepared with tables, spread with the choicest viands of the season, and a profusion of wines of the first quality for the refreshment of the guests. Neither expense nor trouble were spared to ensure their amusement and comfort. Many of the best sets of singing and dancing-girls were procured from Calcutta, Moorshedabad, and Benares, with different accomplishments, from the soft, melodious, and tender steps of Neikee, to the more loud sonorous tone and Kurwa dance of Bunnoo. There are also some very good native jesters and some excellent jugglers, who perform most astonishing tricks and deceptions [27]."

It will have, we think, appeared from the above account of the Hindoo recreations and diversions that the natives of India are an active, gay, lively people; who, were they better governed, might perhaps become more thoughtful in proportion as they became happier. Slaves, who have lost all those things which render life desirable, are yet, at times, the gayest of the gay. Like the beggar, who laughs among robbers, because he has nothing to lose, the slave is merry from the consciousness that he has already

[27] Correspondent of the Bengal *Hurkaru*.

experienced the worst of human ills, and is proof against the shafts of fate. The Hindoos are not exactly in this position. They have lost much, but have still much to lose. They have also much to gain; and if we would perform our duty towards them, we must impart to them our language and our civilization, in fact, render them, as far as possible, a part of ourselves, and not, as some persons fondly imagine, render them back their independence, than which we could not bestow on them a more fatal gift, since they could not preserve their country from foreign conquest for an hour.

Chapter XIV.

WARS.

If war be the parent of vast misery and of numerous vices, it is, in its turn, among brave enlightened men, the safeguard of national independence and personal freedom. Curse it we may, when undertaken unjustly or barbarously conducted: but woe to that nation which shall, in any age, cease to cultivate the military art, or to treat its worthy professors with indifference; for the day of that people's fall is at hand when it must drain the bitter cup of servitude to the dregs. Still, no aspect of human nature is in general less lovely than that which it exhibits in war, if we except the features it wears in those diplomatical cabinets where wars are hatched and where justice and patriotism are seldom of the conclave.

It has already been proved that neither the *Kshatriyas*[1] (or imaginary military caste) nor the Rajpoots, who, being naturally brave, are prone to engage in war, ever monopolized the honours of the military profession in India[2]. Its soldiers have been taken almost indifferently from every caste, from that of the Brahmins down to the very Pariahs[3]; and

[1] Buchanan, Journey through the Mysore, vol. i. p. 258.

[2] According to the Brahmins, the Rajpoots are a tribe of Sudras. Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 303.

[3] Dubois, Description, &c. of the People of India, p. 530. "The right of bearing arms," says this writer, "which, in early times, belonged only to the Rajpoots, is now universal; and all castes, from the Brahmins down to the Pariahs, may now become soldiers. Sometimes Brahmins are found commanding armies; and sometimes, particularly in the Mahratta service,

Ancient fortified City in Rajast'han.

this, whatever may be pretended to the contrary, appears to have always been the real state of things; though in books, whether of laws or of customs, we find an Utopian system, according to which every individual is bound down by chains of adamant to pursue the calling of his forefathers.

However, the profession of arms was in ancient India held in high estimation. The Brahminical order had usurped for themselves the first rank; but they delegated to the military class, however formed, the dangers and cares of government, satisfied with ruling from their spiritual throne the despots of mankind. To this single circumstance may, we think, be attributed the feebleness of all Indian governments, and the inefficiency of their armies. In countries where the priesthood forms a separate caste or order in the state, the education which fits a man to be a pagan priest (at least, in such a system of paganism as prevails in India) at the same time disqualifies him to a certain extent from comprehending the theory or pursuing the routine of civil business. He belongs to a body in all cases more or less distinct from the state, seeking self-aggrandisement at all hazards, actuated by separate interests. His mind, clouded and darkened by a multitude of little passions, contracts itself perpetually, and quickly becomes a scene too narrow for the marshalling and development of grand ideas of public good. Unable to perceive how, by a sublime dispensation of Providence, the true interests of the individual are indissolubly connected with those of the state, he substitutes the maxims of cunning for those of wisdom, and resorts to the mean and despicable devices of selfish craft. If any course of action were proposed which, by promoting the

standing in the ranks." In support of the assertion that all Hindoos are permitted the use of arms, see also Asiat. Res. vol. xi. p. 218.

general welfare of India, might incidentally trench, however slightly or remotely, upon the privileges of the Brahmins, the priest, roused like a serpent in his lair, would inevitably oppose the measure to the utmost; and gifted, in the popular belief, with the power of inflicting punishment both in this world and the next, his opposition would be decisive: hence, as far as his influence extended, all innovation or improvement, whether in arts or arms, would be proscribed.

But there is no art by which the progress of nations can be wholly stayed. In spite of the institutions of the Brahmins, and the innumerable priestly phalanxes by which those institutions were sought to be preserved intact, Time, the grand innovator, who changes under our very eyes the features of our most durable works, and reconciles us to the change, imperceptibly clothed the military system of India in new forms, which, in their turn, yielded to others still newer. Thus, in the present day, scarcely do we find a single trace of the ancient style of warfare. Every thing is changed—castrametation, tactics, weapons. In former ages an Indian army, we are told, consisted of four elements—elephants, chariots, cavalry, and infantry. Such was the state of things at the time of Alexander's invasion; for in the army of Porus, who was subdued and taken prisoner by the Macedonian, there were ranged in the line of battle eighty-five elephants[*], three hundred chariots, and thirty thousand infantry, besides the cavalry, which, in all Asiatic armies, constitutes an important division of the forces.

"All the ancient authors," says Dubois, "speak of towers supported by elephants, filled with combatants, in the armies of the Asiatic princes; but I

[*] Q. Curtius, viii. c. 13; Arrian. Exp. Al. v. c. 15. Compare Menu, vii. 181, &c.

believe we shall not form correct ideas on the subject without making great allowances for the imagination of those writers. If these turrets were at all high, the motion of the animal, which, from its manner of walking, is more jolting than that of any other, would necessarily make it lose its balance and tumble down. For the elephant does not move like other quadrupeds, advancing the legs alternately, but brings forward the two legs of one side together[5]. If they were constructed with much solidity, they would be too heavy for the animal, which, though the strongest of any, does not support a weight proportioned to his size. For, powerful as he is, they can scarcely venture a heavier load on his back than twelve hundred weight; and they must take some pains to reconcile him even to that.

"Of all that has been written, therefore, of castles filled with armed men, on the backs of elephants[6], a great deal must have been borrowed from indistinct observers, unacquainted with the nature of the animal, who, being astonished at its enormous bulk, fancied its strength to be equally great. Towers such as have been described are, therefore, plainly absurd. At the same time I do not assert that the elephant has not been used to great advantage in war. The soldiers on his back were furnished with numbers of arrows, or other missile weapons, which they could employ with great effect against an enemy's army. The elephant himself, when accoutred for the combat, was still more terrible than his riders,

[5] Like the *Narraganseta* palfreys, in Mr. Cooper's 'Last of the Mohicans.'

[6] The modern *howdah*, however, sometimes contains two or three small apartments under a dome supported by gilded pillars, in which the chieftain and his attendants travel. Were their motions disagreeable, they would scarcely be the favourite beast of the voluptuous princes of India. Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 55.

and wonderfully contributed to spread terror and confusion amongst enemies unaccustomed to that species of warfare[7]."

The next department in the ancient armies of India were the chariots, which appear to have been numerous and of vast dimensions. In these all the principal officers rode forth to battle. The royal chariot, which would seem to have been sometimes drawn by five horses, was distinguished by peculiar magnificence; and "I remember," says the Abbé Dubois, "to have read of some prince who, in preparing for war, got a troop of devils for a team, so that he could not fail to drive at a good pace." When two monarchs were engaged in war with each other, though secretly practising every nefarious art to cut off their rivals, they still maintained the outward forms of politeness, never commencing a battle without saluting each other from their chariots; but concluding with mutual defiance. A story is told of one of these ancient kings, who, when about to give battle to his enemy, first shot an arrow of compliment, which dropped at the foot of his chariot. The other followed his example, and then the combat began.

The cavalry, which formed the third division of a Hindoo army, was not, in ancient times, regarded as of much importance; almost the whole dependence of the general being placed upon the infantry. In those armies thirty-two different kinds of weapons, models of which are to be seen in the hands of the thirty-two principal gods, were in use. As few or none of these instruments bear any resemblance to those employed by Europeans, it would be difficult to convey by description a correct idea of their fantastic forms: "all that can be said in general is, that some were edged for hacking, some pointed for the

[7] Description, &c. of the People of India, p. 535.

thrust, and others obtuse and weighty for the purpose of contusion[8]."

Time, as we have observed, has operated numerous changes in the Indian system of warfare; yet many arms and usages which prevailed in former ages may still be found among the modern military of Hindoostan. In all, the most distinguishing feature is a gorgeous barbaric splendour, requisite to the gratification of Asiatic taste. This is strikingly visible in the description of a Mahratta army, drawn up by one who had beheld them with a curious eye, both in peace and war, and had, perhaps, in the many years spent among them, contracted a strong liking for oriental pomp and magnificence. "The Mahratta armies," he observes, "are generally composed of various nations and religions, who consequently form a very motley collection. They wear no regular uniform, are under very little discipline, and few in the same line, either of horse or foot, have the same weapons; some are armed with swords and targets, others with matchlocks or muskets; some carry bows and arrows, others spears, lances, or war-rockets; many are expert with the battle-axe, but the sabre is indispensable with all. The men in armour make a strange appearance; a helmet covering the head, hangs over the ears, and falls on the shoulders; the body is cased with iron net-work, on a thick quilted vest; their swords are of the finest temper, and the horsemen are very expert at this weapon. They are not so fond of curved blades as the Turks and Persians, but prefer a straight two-edged sword, and will give a great price for those which they call Alleman, or German, though formerly brought from Damascus."

There are no regular commanders by seniority or merit in these armies. Of the principal officers, who are

[8] Dubois, Description, &c. p. 530—545.

called *jemidars*, some command five thousand horse, others no more than five hundred. This is the result of the nature of the Mahratta government, which, in many points, resembles the feudal system of Europe; the great chieftains, like the ancient barons, holding their estates of the prince, on condition of bringing into the field a military force proportioned to their territory. Yet every rajah, prince, or leader, is in some degree responsible to the Peshwa, or head of the empire, for his general conduct, pays a tribute for his district, and, when summoned, attends with the stipulated body of men. But "over this corps he has the entire command; to him and his fortune they are alone attached, and adhere to whatever party he joins. This variety of independent commanders destroys that authority and subordination which prevail in European armies, and may in some measure account for the want of discipline in so large a body; where every man beats a drum, blows a trumpet, or fires his matchlock when he pleases, and frequently when loaded with ball.

"The Indian camps display a variety of standards and ensigns; each chieftain has his own: red seems the prevailing colour, but they are seldom decorated with any thing like armorial bearings. The banner which was always carried before Ragobah was small and swallow-tailed, of crimson and gold tissue, with gold fringes and tassels. Some of the flags are on very high poles, and larger than a ship's ensign. The most considerable chieftains display their own colours, have separate encampments, and their own bazaar, or market, in which they collect duties, and make such regulations as they think proper, without control from the sovereign.

"The Mahratta cavaliers of distinction frequently ornament their saddles, as also the heads of their horses, with the bushy tails of the Tibet cows. On

one side an attendant carries an umbrella, generally of velvet embroidered with gold; on the other is a man with a large fan, or *chowri*, formed by the tail of the wild cow from Tibet, covered with long flowing hair, delicately white, and soft as silk; the handle is gold or silver, sometimes studded with jewels. The *chowri* is useful in keeping off the flies and other insects that swarm in hot climates, and also forms a part of oriental state. The cruppers, martingales, and bridles of the horses are ornamented, according to the rank and wealth of the owner, with gold or silver plates, knobs, coins, and a variety of decorations: the tails of the grey horses are frequently dyed of a red and orange colour[9], and the manes plaited with silk and ribands, interspersed with silver roses. The camp abounds with farriers, and every thing necessary for their profession."

"The magnificence of the Indian tents, pavilions, and canopies, especially among the Mogols, greatly surpasses every thing of the kind in Europe. The Mahrattas, who enjoy more pleasure in a camp than in a city, would seem to prefer their tents to houses; and, as they are usually accompanied to the field by their women and children, it is requisite that their tents should be of large dimensions, and divided into several apartments[10]. The camp-followers, who in number far exceed the soldiers, consist of mountebanks, magicians of all sorts, soothsayers, and fortune-tellers, rope-dancers, slight-of-hand men, sharpers, thieves, fakîrs, blind beggars, goldsmiths, jewellers, bankers, drapers, druggists, confectioners, carpenters, tailors, tent-makers, corn-grinders, and farriers. Attached also to each division of the army

[9] In Tibet the manes of the oxen are dyed yellow with *geru* earth. Asiat. Res. vol. xii. p. 464.

[10] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 44; Dubois, Description, &c. p. 541.

are a number of clerical Brahmins, who regularly officiate, offering up prayer and sacrifice to the deities as in the temples.

"Fond of a wandering life, the Mahrattas seem most at home in the camp. The bazaars being supplied with necessaries for the soldiers, and such luxuries as those in a higher station require, they know no wants, and are subject to few restraints: surrounded by their wives and their children, they enjoy the pleasures of domestic life; and many of the principal officers keep greyhounds, cheetas, and hawks, trained to hunting, for their amusement on a march, or when encamped in a sporting country.

"The women frequently ride astride, with one or two children, on a bullock, an ass, or a little tattoo horse, while the men walk by the side. On reaching the encampment, the fatigued husband lies down on his mat, and the wife commences her duties: she first champoos her husband, and fans him to repose; she then champoos the horse, rubs him down, and gives him provender; takes some care of the ox, which has carried their stores, and drives off the poor ass to provide for himself: she next lights a fire, dresses rice and curry, or kneads dough for cakes, which are prepared and baked in a simple manner. When the husband awakes his repast is ready; and having also provided a meal for herself and children, the careful matron occupies the mat, and sleeps till day-break, when all are in motion and ready for another march.

"When a Mahratta expects a battle where there is a chance of being defeated, he mounts a *Bhimra* mare, and girds himself with a broad belt round the loins, the better to enable him to bear the fatigue of a forced march: this girdle is generally made of strong leather, covered with velvet, and divided into small compartments, containing his most valuable papers

and precious jewels; the selected companions of his flight, and a sure resource in adversity[11]."

The orders for marching are usually signified, on the preceding night, by notes to the chiefs, and promulgated by a crier to the army. About four o'clock in the morning the signal is given by the great drum, on the second beating of which an officer sets out with the general's flag, escorted by his own corps. At the same time, or a little before, proceed parties from the various divisions of the army, promiscuously, in vast multitudes, without the slightest order. When the general's flag is erected, which is usually done in a place selected for the convenience of water, without regard to rough or even ground, or defensible position, the flags and tents of the inferior chiefs are pitched as fast as they arrive, while their followers, with their wives and children, dispose of themselves as well as they can. "On these occasions severe affrays frequently happen. The only part of the camp which carries the appearance of regularity is the bazaar, which generally forms a long and broad street to the tent of the great chieftain, and to that of each chief of any consequence; whereas the rest of the camp is so straggling and destitute of order, that it is extremely difficult to penetrate through the crowd of camels, horses, and bullocks, to the interior; which subjects them to the utmost confusion in case of alarm: and so totally is all regard to situation and disposition neglected, that I have seen the artillery-park so stationed as to be rendered entirely useless, except by sacrificing their own people which surrounded it[12]."

In one of those numerous civil wars which have drenched the plains of Rajpootana with blood, Pirthi Ruj and his uncle, Soorajmul, took opposite sides.

[11] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 52, 61.

[12] Sir Charles Malet, Letter from a Mahratta Camp, Or. Mem. vol. ii. p. 150.

They met upon the field,—the uncle at the head of a rebel army, the nephew in the ranks of his prince,—and the youthful chief, burning with valour, soon covered his uncle with wounds. When many warriors had already fallen on both sides, without bringing the combat to a conclusion, they mutually retreated from the field, and bivouacked in sight of each other. Under these circumstances Pirthi Raj conceived the design of visiting his uncle. He found him "in a small tent reclining on a pallet, having just had 'the barber' to sew up his wounds. He rose and met his nephew with the customary respect, as if nothing unusual had occurred; but the exertion caused some of his wounds to bleed afresh, when the following dialogue ensued:—

Pirthi Raj. Well, uncle, how are your wounds?

Soorajmul. Quite healed, my child, since I have the pleasure of seeing you.

Pirthi Raj. But, uncle, I have not yet seen the *Dêwânji*[13]. I first ran to see you, and I am very hungry; have you any thing to eat?

Dinner was soon served, and the extraordinary pair sat down and 'ate off' the same platter;' nor did Pirthi Raj hesitate to eat the *pân*[14] presented on his taking leave.

Pirthi Raj. You and I will end our battle in the morning, uncle.

Soorajmul. Very well, child, come early."

They again met, and the rebels were defeated; after which the valiant Pirthi Raj returned in triumph to Cheetore[15].

A passage from the wars of Baber will serve to

[13] "Regent;" the title by which the Rana is most familiarly known.

[14] "This compound of the betel or areca-nut, cloves, mace, terra japonica, and prepared lime, is always taken after meals, and has not unfrequently been a medium for administering poison." *Colonel Tod.*

[15] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 296, 297.

illustrate the character of Hindoo valour. "With all Baber's qualities as a soldier, supported by the hardy clans of the 'cloud mountains' of Karatagin, the chances were many that he and they terminated their career on the 'yellow rivulet' of Biana. Neither bravery nor skill saved him from this fate, which he appears to have expected. What better proof can be desired than Baber's own testimony to the fact, that a horde of invaders from the Jaxartes, without support or retreat, were obliged to entrench themselves to the teeth in the face of their Rajpoot foe, alike brave and overpowering in numbers! To ancient jealousies he was indebted for not losing his life instead of gaining a crown, and for being extricated from a condition so desperate, that even the frenzy of religion, which made death martyrdom in 'this holy war,' scarcely availed to expel the despair which so infected his followers, that in the bitterness of his heart he says, 'not a single person who uttered a manly word, nor an individual who delivered a courageous opinion.'

"Baber advanced from Agra and Sikri to oppose Rana Sanga, in full march to attack him at the head of almost all the princes of Rajast'han. Although the annals state some points which the imperial historian has not recorded, yet both accounts of the conflict correspond in all the essential details. On the 5th of Kartik, S. 1584 (A. D. 1528), according to the annals, the Rana raised the siege of Biana, and at Kanua encountered the advanced guard of the Tatars, amounting to fifteen hundred men, which was entirely destroyed; the fugitives carrying to the main body the accounts of the disaster, which paralyzed their energies, and made them entrench for security, instead of advancing with the confidence of victory. Reinforcements met the same fate, and were pursued to the camp. Accustomed to reverses,

Baber met the check without dismay,-and adopted every precaution that a mind fertile in expedients could suggest to reassure the drooping spirits of his troops. He threw up intrenchments, in which he placed his artillery, connecting his guns by chains, and in the more exposed parts *chevaux de frise*, united by leather ropes; a precaution continued in every subsequent change of position. Every thing seemed to aid the Hindoo cause: even the Tatar astrologer asserted, that as Mars was in the west, whoever should engage coming from the opposite quarter should be defeated. In this state of total inactivity, blockaded in his encampment, Baber remained near a fortnight, when he determined to renounce his besetting sin, and merit superior aid to extricate him from his peril. But the destruction of the wine-flasks would appear only to have added to the existing consternation, and made him, as a last resort, appeal to their faith. Having addressed them in a speech of manly courage, though bordering on despair, he seized the happy moment which his exhortation elicited, to swear them on the Koran to conquer or perish. Profiting by this excitement, he broke up his camp, and marched in order of battle to a position two miles in advance, the Rajpoot skirmishing up to his guns. Without a regular circumvallation, his moveable pallisadoes and guns chained, he felt no security. The inactivity of Sanga can scarcely escape censure, however we may incline to palliate it by supposing that he deemed his enemy in the toils, and that every day's delay brought with it increased danger to him. Such reasoning would be valid if the heterogeneous mass by which the prince of Mewàr was surrounded had owned the same patriotic sentiments as himself: but he ought to have known his countrymen, nor overlooked the regulating maxim of their ambition '*get land*.' De-

lay was fatal to this last coalition against the foes of his race. Baber is silent on the point to which the annals ascribe their discomfiture, a negotiation pending his blockade at Kanua: but these have preserved it, with the name of the traitor who sold the cause of his country. The negotiation had reached this point, that on condition of Baber's being left Delhi and its dependencies, the Peela-khal at Biana should be the boundary of their respective dominions, and even an annual tribute was offered to the Rana. We can believe that in the position Baber then was, he would not scruple to promise any thing. The chief of Rayseen, by name Sillaidi, of the Tuar tribe, was the medium of communication, and though the arrangement was negatived, treason had effected the salvation of Baber.

"On the 16th of March the attack commenced by a furious onset on the centre and right wing of the Tatars, and for several hours the conflict was tremendous. Devotion was never more manifest on the side of the Rajpoot, attested by the long list of noble names amongst the slain, as well as by the bulletin of their foe, whose artillery made dreadful havoc in the close ranks of the Rajpoot cavalry, which could not force the entrenchments, nor reach the infantry which defended them. While the battle was still doubtful, the Tuar traitor, who led the van, went over to Baber, and Sanga was obliged to retreat from the field, which, in the onset, promised a glorious victory, himself severely wounded, and the choicest of his chieftains slain. Hussein Khan of Mewat, and a son of the last Lodi king of Delhi, who coalesced with Sanga, were amongst the killed. Triumphal pyramids were raised of the heads of the slain, and on a hillock which overlooked the field of battle a tower of skulls was erected; and the con-

querer assumed the title of *Ghâzi*, which has ever since been retained by his descendants[16]."

But the opinion advanced by Orme, and repeated by so many other writers, that the Hindoos are an effeminate pusillanimous race, eager to amass wealth, but wanting the courage to defend it, is not to be removed by one or two examples. Colonel Tod, a far better authority in these matters than Orme, brings forward, in his excellent Annals, innumerable proofs of Hindoo valour, from among which it is difficult to choose. However, perhaps those who believe in the effeminacy of the Hindoos would find it no easy task to produce from the history of any country, ancient or modern, examples of superior valour,—it is in *prudence*, not in *courage*, that the Hindoos are wanting,—or, indeed, more powerful incentives to valour, which account for its existence. From a hundred others we select an exploit of the Chondawut and Suktawut clans, which occurred in an age long subsequent to the time of Baber.

"When Jehângîr had obtained possession of the palladium of Mewâr,—the ancient fortress of Cheetore,—and driven the prince into the wilds and mountains of the west, an opportunity offered to recover some frontier lands in the plains, and the Rana with all his chiefs were assembled for the purpose. But the Suktawuts asserted an equal privilege with their rivals to form the vanguard; a right which their indisputable valour (perhaps superior to that of the other party) rendered not invalid. The Chondawuts claimed it as an hereditary privilege, and the sword would have decided the matter but for the tact of the prince. 'The *herole* (van) to the clan which first enters Ontala,' was a decision which

[16] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 303—306; Memoirs of Baber, p. 339—357.

the Suktawut leader quickly heard, while the other could no longer plead his right when such a gauntlet was thrown down for its maintenance.

"Ontala is the frontier fortress in the plains, about eighteen miles east of the capital, and covering the road which leads from it to the more ancient one of Cheetore. It is situated on a rising ground, with a stream flowing beneath its walls, which are of solid masonry, lofty, and with round towers at intervals. In the centre was the governor's house, also fortified. One gate only gave admission to this castle. The clans, always rivals in power, now competitors in glory, moved off at the same time, some hours before day-break: Ontala the goal, the herole the reward! Animated with hope, a barbarous and cruel foe the object of their prowess, their wives and families spectators, on their return, of the meed of enterprise; the bard, who sang the praise of each race at their outset, demanding of each materials for a new wreath, supplied every stimulus that a Rajpoot could have to exertion.

"The Suktawuts made directly for the gateway, which they reached as the day broke, and took the foe unprepared; but the walls were soon manned, and the action commenced. The Chondawuts, less skilled in topography, had traversed a swamp, which retarded them; but through which they dashed, fortunately meeting a guide in a shepherd of Ontala. With more foresight than their opponents, they had brought ladders. The chief led the escalade, but a ball rolled him back amidst his vassals: it was not his destiny to lead the herole! Each party was checked. The Suktawut depended on the elephant he rode, to gain admission by forcing the gate; but its projecting spikes deterred the animal from applying its strength. His men were falling thick around him, when a shout from the other party made him

dread their success. He descended from his seat, placed his body on the spikes, and commanded the driver, on pain of instant death, to propel the elephant against him. The gates gave way, and over the dead body of their chief his clan rushed to the combat! But even this heroic surrender of his life failed to purchase the honour for his clan. The lifeless corpse of his rival was already in Ontala; and this was the event announced by the shout which urged his sacrifice to honour and ambition. When the Chondawut chief fell, the next in rank and kin took the lead. He was one of those arrogant, reckless Rajpoots, who signalize themselves wherever there was danger, not only against men, but tigers; and his common appellation was, 'the mad chief of Deoghur.' When his leader fell, he rolled the body in his scarf; then tying it on his back, scaled the wall; and with his lance having cleared the way before him, he threw the dead body over the parapet of Ontala, shouting, 'the vanguard to the Chondawut! we are first in!' The shout was echoed by the clan, and the rampart was in their possession nearly at the moment of the entry of the Suktawuts. The Moguls fell under their swords: the standard of Mewâr was erected in the castle of Ontala; but the leading of the vanguard remained with the Chondawuts [17]."

Among the Nairs, in Malabar, a high sense of honour and great personal courage are generally found. Even that state of poverty and misery to which they have been reduced by the misgovernment of the East India Company, has by no means involved the perdition of their moral qualities, which accompany them in adversity, and powerfully interest all such as have intimately known them in their

[17] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 149, 150.

behalf. "Their lordships," says Mr. Baber, in his examination before the peers, "will, I trust, pardon a little enthusiasm, while pleading the cause of the inhabitants of Malabar. I have been placed in a variety of situations, of very considerable peril, during times of trouble. Often have I been opposed to persons in open rebellion, with no other defenders but Nairs, and invariably have I found them faithful, nay, devoted to me; and many even have been killed and wounded by my side; and in order to shield my person from danger, they have surrounded me, and forced me behind a tree. From a principle of gratitude, therefore, I am bound to speak with more than ordinary feeling of them[18]."

No action, perhaps, in which the Mahrattas were ever engaged, is better calculated to exhibit the desperate valour of the Hindoos, than the great battle of Paniput, in which they were defeated. The forces of the Musulmans, regular and irregular, exceeded 300,000; that of the Mahrattas, probably, did not amount to above half that number; but they were brave, hardy, veteran troops, accustomed to victory. On the other hand, the *Durranis*, their enemies, were men of great bodily strength, and were mounted on Turkish horses, naturally hardy and powerful, and rendered still more so by constant exercise. Ahmed Shah Durrani, the Musulman sultan, marched from his camp on the 19th of October, 1760, commanding the baggage to follow the army. On the 26th, in the afternoon, the *herole*, or vanguard of the hostile armies, encountered near

[18] Minutes of Evidence, &c. 1830, p. 205. This passage, the reader will allow, is no less honourable to Mr. Baber than to the Nairs; for, had he not performed his duty among them with mildness and justice, there would have been no ground for their attachment to him.

Sumalket Serai, and the Mahrattas were worsted with considerable loss. For several days portions of the armies met and skirmished in this manner, the Mahrattas constantly losing ground, until they came to Paniput, where the Hindoo commander determined to fix his camp. The Shah, elated with his success, likewise encamped about eight miles from the Mahratta lines; but was still careful, as during the whole of his march, to surround the camp with felled trees during the night.

While the armies occupied this position, a party of 12,000 horse, commanded by Govind Pandit, which had been sent out to cut off the Shah's supplies, was suddenly attacked and routed by the Durranis, who likewise slew Govind Pandit, and laid his head at the feet of the Shah. A party of 2,000 horse, returning with treasure from Delhi, silently, in the darkness of the night, mistook the Durrani camp for their own; and being cut to pieces, the treasure fell into the enemy's hands. These events, in themselves not unimportant, seemed to indicate that fortune, who had hitherto favoured the Mahratta arms, was about to change sides; the event, however, was still doubtful.

The hostile armies continued for nearly three months, drawn up in front of each other. Every day the troops and cannon on both sides were drawn out; and a distant cannonade, with many skirmishes of horse, and three severe, though partial actions, took place. In these, success was not always on the same side, but rather seemed inclined to desert the Mahrattas. However, what served most to discourage and oppress them, was the famine which now began to make itself felt in the camp, and very soon reached so alarming a height, that the soldiers were constrained to plunder the town of Paniput for food. This scanty supply merely postponed the evil

for a moment. And at length the chiefs and soldiers, in a body, surrounded the general's tent, and said to him,—"It is now two days that we have not had any thing to eat: do not let us perish in this misery: let us make one spirited effort against the enemy, and whatever is our destiny, that will happen." To this the commander assented; and it being resolved that they should march out on the morrow, an hour before day-break, to the attack, they all swore to fight to the last extremity, each person, in confirmation of this engagement, taking a betel-leaf in the presence of his comrades, after the manner of the Hindoos.

Negotiations had previously been set on foot, which had produced no result; and the Mahratta chief willing once more to try their effect, wrote thus laconically to the person who had been charged by the Durrani emperor to conduct the business on his part:—"The cup is now full to the brim, and cannot hold another drop. If any thing can be done, do it, or else answer me plainly at once: hereafter there will be no time for writing or speaking." While the Durranis were consulting upon the step proper to be taken, messengers arrived, bringing word that the Mahrattas were coming out of their lines, the artillery in front, and the troops following. Upon this the Shah gave orders to prepare for action. As soon as the trumpets and other instruments had sounded, the colours of the Mahratta line were perceived advancing slowly and regularly, with the artillery still in front.

"On the 7th of January, 1761, soon after sun-rise, the cannon, musketry, and rockets began to play without intermission, yet our army suffered but little by them[19]; for the armies continuing to advance

[19] The writer, Kasi Rajah Pundit, was in the service of Ahmed Shah, the *Durrani*; yet he would, upon the whole, appear to be tolerably impartial.

towards each other, the Mahratta guns being very large and heavy, and their level not easily altered, their shot soon began to pass over our troops, and fell a mile in the rear. On our side the cannon fired but little, except from the Grand Vizir's division. As the armies were advancing towards each other, Ibrahim Khan Gardi rode up to the *Bhow*[20]; and, after saluting him, said,—'You have long been displeased with me, for insisting on the regular monthly pay of my people: this month your treasury having been plundered, we have not received any pay at all; but never mind that—this day I will convince you that we have not been paid so long without meriting it.'

"He immediately spurred his horse, and, returning to his division, he ordered the standards to be advanced; and, taking a colour in his own hand, he directed the cannon and musketry of his division to cease firing; then leaving two battalions opposed to Berkhordar Khan and Amir Khan's division, to prevent their taking him in flank, he advanced with seven battalions to attack Doondi Khan and Hafiz Rahmut Khan's division with fixed bayonets. The Rohillas received the charge with great resolution; and the action was so close that they fought hand to hand. Near eight thousand Rohillas were killed or wounded, and the attack became so hard upon them, that but few of the people remained with their chiefs; not above five hundred, or at most a thousand, with each, after the violence of the first charge."

The two battalions left to oppose the Shah's flank divisions, conducted themselves gallantly, repulsing the Durranis as often as they attempted to advance. During three hours the attack was carried with the

[20] The commander-in-chief of the Mahrattas, with his complete name, Sedasheo Row Bhow. Ibrahim Khan was a Musulman chief in the service of the Hindoos.

most impetuous bravery by Ibrahim Khan, six of whose battalions were almost entirely cut to pieces, while he himself received several wounds. "In the centre of the line the Bhow, with Biswas Row and the household troops, charged the division of the Grand Vizir. The Mahrattas broke through a line of ten thousand horse, seven thousand Persian musketeers, and one thousand camels, with *zumburuks*[21] (small artillery) upon them, killing and wounding about three thousand of them. Among the killed was Attai Khan, the Grand Vizir's nephew. The division gave ground a little; but the Grand Vizir himself stood firm, with three or four hundred horse and fifty zumburuk camels: he himself in complete armour, dismounted to fight on foot.

"The Nawâb, Shujâ-ud-Dowlah, whose division was next, could not see what was going on on account of the dust; but finding the sound of men and horses in that quarter suddenly diminish, he sent me to examine into the cause. I found the Grand Vizir in an agony of rage and despair, reproaching his men for quitting him. 'Our country is far off, my friends,' said he, 'whither do you fly?' But no one regarded his orders or exhortations. Seeing me, he said; 'Ride to my son Shujâ-ud-Dowlah, and tell him, that if he does not support me immediately, I must perish.' I returned with this message to the Nawâb, who said, that the enemy being so near, and likely to charge his division, the worst consequences might follow to the

[21] Or rather, perhaps, large muskets: there were likewise camels which carried small swivels. This portable kind of artillery is much used in the east. See Bernier's account of the Mogol armies; Colonel Tod's Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 339; Malcolm's Hist. of Persia, vol. i. p. 621, vol. ii. p. 499. (4to. edit.)

whole army if he made any movement at that time, which might enable the enemy to pass through the line."

The Nawâb's division, though not numerous, stood in such close order, and maintained its ground so firmly, that the enemy did not think proper to charge it. In fact, both the Durranis and the Rohillas, as if animated by a rivalry in valour, performed prodigious acts of courage; and the latter, who were armed with a great number of rockets, fired volleys of two thousand at a time, which not only terrified the horses by their dreadful noise, but likewise did so much execution that the Mahrattas were unable, in their quarter, to advance to the charge.

"The action continued in nearly this state from morning till noon; and though we suffered least in point of killed and wounded, yet, upon the whole, the Mahrattas seemed to have the advantage. About noon the Shah received advice that the Rohillas and the Grand Vizir's divisions had the worst of the engagement; upon which he sent for the *Neshkchis* (a corps of horse with particular arms and dress, who are always employed in carrying and executing the Shah's immediate commands), and, two thousand of them being assembled, he sent five hundred of them to his own camp, to drive out by force all armed people whom they should find there, that they might assist in the action; and the remaining one thousand five hundred he ordered to meet the fugitives from the battle, and to kill every man who should refuse to return to the charge. This order they executed so effectually, that after killing a few, they compelled seven or eight thousand men to return to the field. Some were also found in the camp, and some the Shah sent from the reserve which was with him. Of these he sent four thousand to cover the right flank, and about ten thousand to

the support of the Grand Vizir, with orders to charge the enemy sword in hand, in close order, and at full gallop.

"About one o'clock these troops joined the Grand Vizir, who immediately mounted his horse, and charged the body of the Mahratta army, where the Bhow commanded in person. Shah Pussund Khan and Najîb-ud-Dowlah took them in flank at the same time, which produced a terrible effect. This close and violent attack lasted for nearly an hour, during which time they fought on both sides with spears, swords, battle-axes, and even daggers. Between two and three o'clock Biswas Row was wounded and dismounted from his horse, which being reported to the Bhow, he ordered them to take him up and place him upon his elephant. The Bhow himself continued the action near half an hour longer on horseback, at the head of his men; when all at once, as if by enchantment[22], the whole Mahratta army at once turned their backs and fled at full speed, leaving the field of battle covered with heaps of dead. The instant they gave way, the victors pursued them with the utmost fury; and as they gave no quarter, the slaughter is scarcely to be conceived, the pursuit continuing for ten or twelve *coss* in every direction in which they fled. Of every description of people, men, women, and children, there were said to be five hundred thousand souls in the Mahratta camp, of whom the greatest part were killed or taken prisoners[23]."

[22] "The Mahratta army fled in consequence of the death of Biswas Row, their chief. This is always the case with Asiatic armies." English Notes; Asiat. Res. vol. iii. p. 135.

[23] Kasi Rajah Pandit, Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 91—139. The account of this Hindoo author is the most interesting, and perhaps the most authentic, which we possess of this celebrated battle, and of the detestable cruelty of the Durranis after the victory; and to his narrative, therefore, we refer the

It would be easy to multiply even still more illustrious examples of Hindoo valour. On the field of Mairta, where both armies were Indian, the Rahtore Rajpoots exhibited a degree of desperate courage, which no Tatar or Mamluk ever surpassed. So did they likewise in the battle of Tonga, or Salsont, where they charged and overwhelmed the flower of Sindia's army, commanded by the adventurer De Boigne. Again, before Ajmere, they attacked De Boigne's brigade, which was advantageously posted, and defended by eighty pieces of cannon, the same heroic soldiers calling aloud, "remember Patun," regardless of showers of grape, charged up to the cannon's mouth, driving every thing before them, cutting down the line which defended the guns, and passing on to assault the Mahrattas, who were flying in all directions to avoid their impetuous valour[24].

Of the spirit which animates the Hindoo soldiers in our own service, the following anecdote will convey some idea. "One of our men, a noble young Rajpoot, about nineteen years of age, and six feet high, had been sent with an elephant to forage in the wilds of Nirwur. A band of at least fifty predatory horsemen attacked him, and demanded the surrender of the elephant, which he met by pointing his musket and giving them defiance. Beset on all

reader, who desires to be more fully informed. With respect to the amount of the Mahratta army, the author of the English notes on the performance of Kasi Rajah observes, "This number seems very great; but any person acquainted with the number of followers in an Indian camp will not disbelieve it. Even in *English* camps in India, *three followers to each fighting man* is considered a moderate number." Asiatic Res. vol. iii. p. 501. See also Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 469; Mill's History of British India, vol. iii. p. 414.

[24] Colonel Tod, Personal Narrative, vol. i. p. 739, 753, 766; Mill, History of British India, vol. vi. p. 399. As a high testimony in favour of Rajpoot valour, consult the opinion of Bernier, in Osborne's Collection, vol. ii. p. 116.

sides he fired, was cut down, and left for dead, in which state he was found, and brought to camp upon a litter. One sabre cut had opened the back entirely across, exposing the action of the viscera, and his arms and wrists were barbarously hacked: yet he was firm, collected, and even cheerful; and to a kind reproach for his rashness, he replied, 'What would you have said, Captain Sahib, had I surrendered the company's musket (*Compani ca bandooq*) without fighting.' From their temperate habits the wound in the back did well; but the severed nerves of the wrists brought on locked-jaw, of which he died. The company have thousands who would die for their bandooq[35]."

In the history of all barbarous and semi-barbarous nations, we constantly read of sudden flights from the battle-field, caused by some panic fear. Such events are, in fact, common even in the histories of Greece and Rome. From these, however, it would be highly irrational to infer the cowardice of those who thus yield to some ill-defined terror. The Rajpoot, whom we have seen charging up to the cannon's mouth, dreads to encounter those wandering meteoric fires, which flit at night over battle-fields and places of great sacrifice. "At Gwalior, on the east side of that famed fortress, where myriads of warriors have fattened the soil, these phosphorescent lights often present a singular appearance. I have marked the procession of those lambent night-fires becoming extinguished at one place, and rising at another, which, aided by the unequal locale, have been frequently mistaken for the Mahratta prince returning with his numerous torch-bearers from a distant day's sport. I have dared as bold a Rajpoot as ever lived to approach them, whose sense of the levity of my desire was strongly depicted, both

[35] Colonel Tod, Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 457, note.

in speech and mien: 'men he would encounter, but not the spirits of those erst slain in battle.' It was generally about the conclusion of the rains that these lights were observed, when evaporation took place from those marshy grounds impregnated with salts[26]."

To this we shall add a concise description of an Indian battle-field, after the action. "The river dividing the armies, our fatigued troops were incapable of pursuing flying cavalry; we therefore marched a mile further, and encamped near Hossamlee, on ground lately occupied by the enemy, who in that expectation had cut down the trees, destroyed the village, and burned all the corn and provender they could not carry off: the surrounding plain, deprived of its verdant ornaments, was covered with putrid carcases and burning ashes: the hot wind wafting from these fetid odours, and dispersing the ashes among the tents, rendered our encampment extremely disagreeable. During the night hyænas, jackals, and wild beasts of various kinds, allured by the scent, prowled over the field with a horrid noise; and the next morning a multitude of vultures, kites, and other birds of prey were seen asserting their claims to a share of the dead. It was to me a scene replete with horrid novelty, realizing the prophet's denunciation: 'I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the Lord; the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy[27].'"

[26] History of the Rajpoot Tribes, vol. i. p. 71.
[27] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 73, 74.

Chapter XV.

GOVERNMENT.

The Government of India must be contemplated in its original form, as it existed in the theory of its founder; or, at least, in the form which it assumed when first put in operation,—for thus only can a true idea of it be obtained. The numerous revolutions which have changed the moral and political aspect of Hindoostan, have prevented this system of government from availing itself of the ripening power of time; for it has never been sufficiently consolidated to maintain one uniform tendency, and spurn the influences of other systems and institutions. Governments may be influenced from without in various ways; foreign laws may force themselves a way into their frame, and mingling imperceptibly with their texture and consistence, may thus ameliorate or modify them; or they may operate so as to remove them from their position, for a time, and stand in their way to improvement; or they may even, when they have gained some ground, thrust them back, as it were, and thus, in effect, render them worse than of themselves they would ever have been.

It is not quite clear which of those processes has taken place in Hindoostan. Foreign laws and customs have been introduced, at various epochs, and very numerous races of men have been subjected to their influence; and by this means the native institutions have been kept at a stand—have been put aside, as it were, for a while—and then, when the mutations of power have allowed them to come again into

play, they have been brought out, like an antiquated garment, and fastened by force upon the shoulders of a differently moulded society for which they were by no means fitted. To reason upon their character or efficacy in so unnatural a position, is, therefore, by no means equitable. If we would throughly comprehend their value, and properly estimate the merit of their author, we should direct our view upon the rude and savage clans for whom they were originally framed; when it might, perhaps, appear that even the Hindoo theocracy, in those ignorant ages in which it was constructed, was not much behind the other rude governments of the world.

The government of India, introduced by the Brahmins, was undoubtedly a genuine theocracy, the law-giver pretending to promulgate nothing but what was revealed to him by the Divinity; for which reason he demanded greater veneration and more unconditional obedience. It would appear that a large majority of the Hindoos very readily admitted the sacred claims of their legislator, in the first place because their pride was gratified by believing that their laws were framed by God himself; and, secondly, because they were too ignorant to foresee how much slavery and misery their easy credulity was to entail upon them. It is no doubt proper that mankind should venerate those who frame their laws, or watch over their well-being; but when this veneration is carried to extravagance, when it serves to inculcate absurd notions of the hereditary subserviency of one part of the human race to another, it then becomes highly mischievous in its tendency, and requires to be checked. A passage from the Mahâbhârata, one of the most ancient and sacred books of the Hindoos, will show how early this feeling of respect assumed a wrong direction among the people of India:—

"Without a ruler no country can prosper; health, virtue, &c. are of no avail; two will invade the property of one, and many will attack two; thus men will eventually destroy each other, as the various species of fish. In this manner mankind were continually oppressing each other, when they went to Brahma to give them a ruler. Brahma directed Menu to become their Rajah. He replied,—'I fear a sinful action. Government is arduous, particularly so among ever-lying men.' They said unto him,—'Fear not, you will receive a recompense, of beasts a fiftieth part, and thus also of gold; we will give you a tenth of corn, increasing your store; a becoming duty on damsels, and on disputes and gaming. Men, exalted in wealth or science, shall be subordinate to you, as gods are to the great Indra: thus, become our Rajah, powerful, and not to be intimidated, you will govern us in peace, as Cuvêra does the Yacshas. Whatever meritorious actions are performed by subjects protected by the Rajah, a fourth part of the merit shall belong to you.' Thus, let those who desire advancement hold the Rajah superior to themselves (as he defends the people), as a disciple the religious instructor, as the gods the divine Indra. Let them, when in his presence, adore the man who is Rajah."—"What is the reason (said Goudhista) that a Rajah, who, in his birth, life, death, members, &c., resembles all other men, should be as it were adored and respected by powerful heroes, and all mankind; and that on his happiness or misery that of all those depends?" Bhîshma, in reply, relates the institution of government, and endeavours to show that the tranquillity of society depends on the ruler.

Here we have the great original flaw of this system. No nation is thoroughly wretched until it is made to believe that nature constituted from the

first some men to rule hereditarily over others; and that its laws and institutions, however rude and barbarous, have had a divine origin. No work purely human could be supposed to reach perfection at once, and be beyond the reach of amendment; but under what pretence could a pious or superstitious people call for improvement in that which their divinity revealed to them in all possible excellence? By what authority would they set their wisdom above the wisdom of oracles? The belief inculcated by many pagan legislators, that they received their laws directly from Heaven, may therefore be regarded as the principal cause of the very slow progress in civilization observable in several ancient nations. Its proper effect indeed would be to keep the mind and condition of man for ever stationary; but time itself, and the force of circumstances, will operate some changes in spite of every thing. Such changes, however, brought about reluctantly, and in the teeth, as it were, of the national belief, come lagging afar off, in the rear of events, instead of mingling with and giving a colour to them.

When laws are supposed to be revealed, it almost necessarily follows that priests must be their interpreters: and this is the case in Hindoostan. The Brahmin holds the key which unlocks the treasury of law; and he is careful, as might have been foreseen, to unlock it in the manner most advantageous to himself. Even the despotism of the sovereign, which is absolute over every thing else, is not so over religion and its ministers: he is commanded to respect the Brahmins, and in all cases to be guided by their advice. "Let the king," say the laws of Menu, "having risen early, respectfully attend to Brahmins learned in the three Vedas, and by their decision let him abide." Yet the king is described, in the same code, as a terrible divinity, at whose sight all men tremble

with fear, and who crushes alike the weak and the powerful. "Like the sun, he burns eyes and hearts; nor can any human creature on earth ever gaze on him. He, fire and air; he, the god of criminal justice; he, the genius of wealth; he, the regent of waters; he, the lord of the firmament. He is a powerful divinity, who appears in human shape. In his anger is death. He who shows hatred of the king, through delusion of mind, will certainly perish; for speedily will the king apply his heart to that man's destruction[1]."

This powerful and destructive divinity, however, is peremptorily and repeatedly commanded to reverence the Brahmins, and never to take any step without previously consulting these living oracles. "Let not the king, though in the greatest distress, provoke Brahmins to anger; for they, once enraged, could immediately destroy him with his troops, elephants, horses, and cars. What prince could gain wealth by oppressing those, who, if angry, could frame other worlds and regents of worlds, could give being to other gods and mortals[2]?" It is therefore justly remarked by Ward, that the ancient governments of India excluded all popular influence, and were the degraded instruments of a superstitious priesthood[3]. Menu, in fact, is never weary of exalting the Brahmin above the monarch: "His own power, he says, which depends on himself alone, is mightier than the royal power, which depends on other men; by his own might, therefore, may a Brahmin coerce his foes." "A priest, who well knows the law, need not complain to the king of any grievous injury, since,

[1] Institutes of Menu, chap. vii.

[2] Ibid. chap. ix. ver. 315.

[3] View of the History, Literature, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 44.

by his own power, he may chastise those who injure him[4]."

Accordingly, the Brahmins, justly regarding the monarch as their mere tool, held the royal authority and those who exercised it in supreme contempt; for kings, according to their system, being of an inferior caste, they would have considered an union between a member of the royal tribe and one of their own daughters an indignity not to be endured[5]. Such at least were the theoretical notions of the Brahmins; and their practices, in general, corresponded for a time with their theory. The Brahmins being, in reality, the legislators of India, the inventors of and the grand movers in its system of government, by an admirable stroke of priestly policy secured their persons from capital punishment, and their property from taxation. By the Hindoo law, the magistrate is cautioned against imagining evil, even in his heart, against a man of this sacred order: nor could a Brahmin be put to death whatever might be the nature of his crimes. He might, indeed, be imprisoned, banished, or have his head shaved, but his life was to be held inviolable[6]. "Neither shall a king slay a Brahmin, says the law, though convicted of all possible crimes: let him banish the offender from his realm, but with all his property secure, and his body unhurt[7]." And if the law was thus careful to protect the property of offending Brahmins, how

[4] Institutes of Menu.

[5] Or, as Robertson expresses it, they would deem it degradation and pollution, even if they were to eat of the same food as their sovereign. Dissertation, &c. p. 134; Orme, Hist. of Milit. Transact. in India, vol. i. p. 4; Sketches, &c. p. 138.

[6] Ward, View of the History, Literature, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 66.

[7] Institutes of Menu, chap. viii.; Code of Gentoo Laws, chap. xxi. § 10, p. 275, 283.

much more watchfully did it guard that of those who, not being publicly convicted, might be pronounced innocent. "A king, even though dying with want, must not, according to Menu, receive any tax from a Brahmin learned in the Vedas[8]." Placed thus high above their fellow-creatures, it is not to be imagined that they would in general preserve for them either sympathy or compassion; for as men pity those only who suffer calamities to which they themselves are liable, it would, reasoning *à priori*, have been easy to foretell that the sacerdotal caste of India would be calculating, selfish, inhuman.

But, not content with framing the laws, they likewise reserved to themselves the right of interpreting them; and could thus, when their passions or their interest demanded it, elicit by torture from the sacred texts whatever meaning they pleased. The judicial functions, also, when not exercised by the sovereign in person, devolved upon the Brahmins, by whose counsels the monarch was moreover supposed to be guided on all occasions. Had the prince, therefore, at any time been disposed to ameliorate the condition of the people, it was not in his power to introduce, without the concurrence of the Brahmins, any extensive or permanent reform[9]; because the law had descended to specify with the utmost minuteness the manner in which, to the end of time, every action of life was to be performed; and to this law they alone could give a meaning and a tongue. The narrow mind of the Hindoo legislator had found it much easier to command innumerable unmeaning observances, than to put in action a few simple and powerful principles, which, in their unfolding, might have coalesced with

[8] Institutes of Menu, chap. vii.

[9] Robertson regards the sacred "rights of the Brahmins" as a barrier against the encroachments of regal power. Dissert. p. 185.

improving manners, and assumed a new form as they experienced the influence of the spirit of more enlightened periods. But it is the character of superstition to be confused, inconsequent, barbarous, and blind to the future. Nothing, therefore, is so hostile to the progress of knowledge as spiritual despotism, since its influence more completely depends on the maintenance of popular ignorance, than that of any other species of tyranny.

In the theory of the Brahminical system we find more or less strongly marked every characteristic of bad government. The attempt to divide the people into castes, separated by almost insuperable boundaries from each other, though never wholly successful, was productive of irreparable mischief, as has already been shown in our chapter on the subject. In spite, however, of the imperfect, and, in fact, barbarous system of its priestly legislators, India was sometimes blessed with able princes, who exhibited an attachment to science, and organized an enlightened administration, highly honourable to their memory. These examples, it is true, are generally found in the ancient history of the country, of which, unfortunately, too little is known, but they at least show a Hindoo's conception of a good prince. Mrityunjaya, author of a History of India, thus describes the education recommended by king Dhâra to his grandchildren Bhartrihari and Vicramâditya[10]. "Calling the two boys," says the historian, "he gave them good counsel respecting their future studies, directing that they should diligently learn grammar, the Veda, the

[10] This personage has been multiplied into eight or nine different kings, living at widely different periods, but all opposed to another remarkable personage, called Sâlivâhana, against whom they waged continual wars. His history appears, in fact, to be a romance, and his very existence uncertain. Colonel Wilford, Asiatic Researches, vol. ix. p. 117.

Vedânga, the Vedânta, the Dhanur-veda, and the Dharma Sâstras, the Gandharva science, different arts and manufactures, the riding on elephants and horses, driving chariots; that they should be skilful in all kinds of games, in leaping and running, in besieging forts, in forming and breaking bodies of troops; that they should endeavour to excel in every princely quality; should learn to ascertain the power of an enemy; how to make war; to perform journeys; to sit in the presence of the nobles; to separate the different sides of a question; to form alliances; to distinguish between the innocent and the guilty; to assign proper punishments to the wicked; to exercise authority with perfect justice, and that they should be liberal. The boys were then sent to school, and placed under the care of excellent teachers, where they became truly famous [11]."

From the Mahâbhârata we learn the ideas anciently entertained in India respecting the duties of a king; and, strange to say, it is here insinuated that, among his claims to the throne, the approving voice of his future subjects was necessary. His first education having been completed, he was to be invested with a degree of power necessary to obtain a knowledge of royal affairs. If in these preparatory steps he gave full satisfaction to the subjects [12], and they expressed their high approbation of his conduct, he was invested with the regal office. He was now awakened in the morning before day-break, by an

[11] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 44, 45.

[12] By these *subjects* we are, perhaps, to understand the Brahmins, to whom the doctrine of regicide appears to have been familiar. It is in fact related that certain princes who dared to violate the privileges of the castes, and disregarded the remonstrances of the Brahmins, were by their authority deposed and put to death. Robertson's Dissertation, p. 185; Code of Gentoo Laws, Prelim. Discourse, p. cii. cxvi.

officer of his household, who reminded him of his religious and kingly duties. Then the pages in waiting repeated the customary flatteries, and the Brahmins, as he went out, rehearsed the praises of the gods. He next bathed, and worshipped his guardian deity; when the praises of the gods were again chaunted. Then he drank a little water, and caused alms to be distributed among the poor. These duties performed, he entered his assembled court, and took his seat, having his relations and the Brahmins on the right hand, the other castes on his left; and his ministers and councillors near. At a distance in front stood those who chaunted the praises of the gods and of the king; and with them "the charioteers, elephanteers, horsemen, and men of valour." Men of learning had likewise their place in this assembly; together with riding-masters, dancing-masters, tasters, mimics, mountebanks, and the like. The monarch dined at noon, after which he was amused by singers and dancing-girls. He then retired, invoking his guardian deity, visited the temple, saluted the gods, and conversed with the priests; and after resting a little, in the company of learned, wise, and pious men, he spent the evening in conversation, and in reviewing the business of the day. During the night he went abroad in disguise, or learned from spies of every description the state of his kingdom. It was, moreover, his duty to pursue every object till it was accomplished; to succour his dependants; to be hospitable to his guests, however numerous. His lawful amusements were hunting, and visiting his pleasure gardens [13].

[13] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 45, 46. Among the kings of this Utopian model, must, we imagine, be ranked the monarchs of Mágadha, who, according to Colonel Wilford, were lords paramount, and emperors of India, for above two thousand years. Asiat. Res. vol. ix. p. 82.

From these and similar poetical descriptions of what, according to certain Hindoo authors, a king ought to be, Robertson appears to have formed his opinions of what they really were. "Though monarchical government was established," says he, "in all the countries of India to which the knowledge of the ancients extended, the sovereigns were far from possessing uncontrolled or despotic power. No trace, indeed, is discovered there of any assembly or public body, the members of which, either in their own right, or as representatives of their fellow-citizens, could interpose in enacting laws, or in superintending the execution of them. It was to different principles that the natives of India were indebted for restrictions which limited the exercise of regal power." He then dwells on the benefit accruing from the system of castes, and the paramount influence of the Brahmins; and then adds:—"While the sacred rights of the Brahmins opposed a barrier against the encroachments of regal power on the one hand, it was circumscribed on the other by the ideas which those who occupied the highest stations in society entertained of their own dignity and privileges. As none but the members of the caste next in rank [14] to that which religion has rendered sacred could be employed in any function of the state, the sovereigns of the extensive kingdoms anciently established in India found it necessary to intrust them with the superintendence of the cities and provinces too remote to be under

[14] The tissue of errors contained in this view of the subject has been partly exposed in our chapter on the castes. *Sudras* had already attained the rank of princes when the Institutes of Menu were compiled. Chap. vii. 211. The *Kshatriyas*, according to the Brahmins, were extinct before the Mohammedan conquest. Ward, vol. i. p. 64. And the same Brahmins assert that the *Rajpoots* are of the *Sudra* caste. Buchanan, Journey, &c. vol. i. p. 303.

their own immediate inspection. In those stations they often acquired such wealth and influence, that offices conferred during pleasure continued hereditarily in their families, and they came gradually to form an intermediate order between the sovereign and his subjects; and by the vigilant jealousy with which they maintained their own dignity and privileges, they constrained their rulers to respect them, and to govern with moderation and equity [15]."

Pursuing the same subject he farther on remarks,— "Under a form of government, which paid such attention to all the different orders of which the society is composed, particularly the cultivators of the earth, it is not wonderful that the ancients should describe the Indians as a most happy race of men; and that the most intelligent modern observers should celebrate the *equity*, the *humanity*, and *mildness* of Indian policy. A Hindoo Rajah, as I have been informed by persons well acquainted with the state of India, resembles more a father presiding in a numerous family of his own children, than a sovereign ruling over inferiors subject to his dominion. He endeavours to secure their happiness with vigilant solicitude; they are attached to him with the most tender affection, and inviolable fidelity. We can hardly conceive men to be placed in any state more favourable to their acquiring all the advantages derived from social union [16]."

This is a flattering picture, and for the honour of humanity it is to be hoped that the original of this beau ideal of a Rajah has, at some time or another, existed; but never have we read, in any authentic work, of a Hindoo prince answering to this description. Noble and heroic souls, like Jeimul and

[15] Disquisition, &c. p. 184, 186.

[16] Disquisition, &c. p. 188, 18mo. edit.

Putta[17], the defenders of Cheetore, may occasionally be found in the annals of India; but they were merely brave devoted warriors, who knew how to die for their father-land; not equitable, humane, mild rulers, like Numa or Alfred, characters rarely found in a despotic state. "Dr. Robertson has drawn a beautiful picture of an oriental sovereign; but, I fear," says Forbes, "the original is only to be found in Utopian climes. I confess I never met with such a character in my travels; nor can I find one among those of more extensive research in the courts of Asiatic princes, modern as that amiable writer describes his virtuous monarch. I am sorry to dissent from this celebrated historian, and the well-informed persons from whom he obtained the information; but so far from being able to confirm such pleasing characteristics, I must, on the contrary, affirm that I never met with such a pattern of royal virtue, nor with such grateful and amiable subjects, in my intercourse with the inhabitants of India[18]."

From a circumstance noticed by Colonel Tod, we may, however, infer that the government of Hindoo princes, at least in Rajpootana, was less sanguinary and turbulent than that of the Mohammedans. "From the age of Shahâbuddîn, the conqueror of India, and his contemporary Samarsi, to the time we have now reached (the beginning of the 15th century), two entire dynasties, numbering twenty-four emperors and one empress, through assassination, rebellion,

[17] The Leonidas of Rajpoot history, who sacrified himself at the age of sixteen for his country. His young bride had previously fallen, fighting in the foremost ranks against the Tatar invader. Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 326, 327.

[18] If the monarch did not possess the requisite virtues, it was impossible that the people should be grateful for the exercise of them. The gratitude of the people must be called into existence by benefits conferred upon them. Oriental Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 88, 89.

and dethronement, had followed in rapid succession, yielding a result of only nine years to a reign. Of Mewar, though several fell in defending their altars at home, or their religion abroad, eleven princes suffice to fill the same period[19]." But other causes may account for this difference. The Hindoos are far more tolerant of despots, if not of despotism, than the Mohammedans of India, who were habitually, we might almost say instinctively, addicted to rebellion[20]. Two anecdotes related by Bishop Heber, will serve to show to what lengths a Hindoo sovereign may proceed with impunity.

"In the course of our homeward ride Colonel Raper told me," he observes, "that he had had unpleasant news from the palace. The Rânî, the night before, without a trial, or without so much as assigning a reason, murdered one of her female attendants—a woman who bore a fair character, was possessed of considerable wealth, and believed, till lately, to stand high in her mistress's confidence and good graces. Her wealth was supposed to be her only crime. A great alarm had in consequence been excited in the *zenânah* and in the city; and eight other women, chiefly wives and concubines of the late Rajah, believed themselves also marked out for destruction. This atrocity had been perpetrated by the Rânî's own order, and in her presence[21]."

The second anecdote, more atrocious and less credible, is related of the widow of a German adventurer, who had contrived to recommend himself to a Hindoo female chieftain. She had associated him in her power, but pretended to have adopted his reli-

[19] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 287.

[20] And changed their tyrants, though they could never rid themselves of tyranny.

[21] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 420, 421. This murderous old lady was Rânî, or princess of Jeypoor.

gion. "I observed this morning," says the Bishop, "at the gate of Mr. Fisher's compound, a sentry in the strict oriental costume, of turban and long caftan, but armed with musket and bayonet, like our own Sipahis. He said he was one of the Begum Sumroo's regiment, out of which she is bound to furnish a certain number for the police of Meerut. Her residence is in the centre of her own *jaghir* at Sirdhana, about twelve *coss* from Meerut. She is a very little, queer-looking old woman, with brilliant but wicked eyes, and the remains of beauty in her features. She is possessed of considerable talent and readiness in conversation, but only speaks Hindoostani. Her soldiers and people, and the generality of the inhabitants of this neighbourhood, pay her much respect, on account both of her supposed wisdom and her courage, she having, during the Mahratta wars, led, after her husband's death, his regiment very gallantly into action, herself riding at their head into a very heavy fire of the enemy. She is, however, a sad tyranness, and, having the power of life and death within her own little territory, several stories are told of her cruelty, and the noses and ears which she orders to be cut off[22]. One relation of this kind, according to native reports, on which reliance however can rarely be placed, is very horrid. One of

[22] This is a common punishment with oriental despots. When Kutipoor, in Nepâl, was betrayed into the hands of the Gurkhas, their king, Prit'hwi-Nârâyan, put to death all the principal inhabitants, and ordered the noses and lips of every one, even of infants not found in the arms of their mothers, to be cut off. The noses and lips he ordered to be preserved, that he might ascertain the number of the inhabitants. He then changed the name of the place into *Nas-Katapoor*, or the "town of cut-noses." Father Guiseppe's Account of Nepâl, As. Res. vol. ii. p. 319. Compare B. H. Hodgson, on the Law and Police of Nepâl, in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. i. p. 255—279. (London, 1834, 8vo.)

her dancing-girls had offended her, how I have not heard. The Begum ordered the poor creature to be immured alive in a small vault prepared for the purpose, under the pavement of the saloon where the nâtch was then celebrating, and, being aware that her fate excited much sympathy and horror in the minds of the servants and soldiers of her palace, and apprehensive that they would open the tomb and rescue the victim as soon as her back was turned, she saw the vault bricked up before her own eyes, then ordered her bed to be placed directly over it, and lay there for several nights, till the last faint moans had ceased to be heard, and she was convinced that hunger and despair had done their work. This woman calls herself a Christian of the Roman Catholic faith, which was that of her husband Summers[23]."

If we turn from these petty tyrants to the only Brahmin prince in India—the Peshwa of the Mahrattas—we shall find, in the picture of Ragobah, an example of what those royal priests generally were. A slave to that superstition which men of his caste are supposed to despise, he would reply, when intelligence of importance arrived from some of his generals, that he was at his devotions, and that the lucky moment for opening the despatches was not arrived. On a certain day, marked in his horoscope as peculiarly unlucky, the most pious priests and eminent astrologers were convened to avert, by a variety of rites and ceremonies, the inauspicious influence of the planet of the day: he himself came forth at day-break, bare-headed and naked, except the waist, and having

[23] Narrative of a Journey, &c. vol. ii. p. 278, 279. These horrors are supposed to take place in states allied with, or, more properly, subject to Great Britain, of whose justice they may be thought to entertain some apprehension. The vindictive and cruel spirit would certainly not be checked by the consciousness of independence and complete impunity.

watched the rising of the sun, continued until noon gazing steadfastly at the glorious orb, notwithstanding the fierceness of its beams; after which he retired to a tent, where the ceremonies proceeded until midnight, when the malignant star was supposed to have lost its influence.

Cunning, says Forbes, generally usurps the place of wisdom and prudence in an oriental Durbar; and each licentious chieftain, however small his territory, is too commonly the Nero or Tiberius of his petty domain, while his court presents a scene of ambition, sensuality, and cruelty. "At present, in the courts of the Nawabs, petty Rajahs, and other independent despots of India, there is so little sense of moral obligation, that no stigma attaches to the man who plots the most base and villanous means for attaining the ends of venality and corruption; the odium is incurred for not being properly executed. Perhaps this censure should be limited to the verge of the durbars, courts of justice, and revenue departments of those princes; we will hope that the moral sense operates in general among the natives of India as in those of other countries, although often vitiated by the state of government and society [24]."

Among the Rajpoots a form of government, in many respects different from that of the other Hindoo states, prevails, and must be allowed to bear a considerable resemblance to the ancient feudal system of Europe. Bernier was, perhaps, the first traveller who remarked this similarity [25]; but it was left for Colonel Tod to follow up the discovery in his learned and able Annals of Rajast'han. "It is more than doubtful," he observes, "whether any code of civil or criminal jurisprudence ever existed in any of these principalities; though it is certain that none is at this

[24] Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 22—24.

[25] See his Travels in Osborne's Collection, folio, vol. ii. p. 164.

day discoverable in their archives. But there is a martial system peculiar to these Rajpoot states, so extensive in its operation as to embrace every object of society. This is so analogous to the feudal system of Europe, that I have not hesitated to hazard a comparison between them, with reference to a period when the latter was yet imperfect. It is in these remote regions, so little known to the western world, and where original manners lie hidden under those of the conquerors, that we may search for the germs of the constitutions of European states[26]."

"As in Europe, for a length of time, traditionary custom was the only regulator of the rights and tenures of this system, varying in each state, and not unfrequently (in its minor details) in the different provinces of one state, according to their mode of acquisition and the description of occupants when acquired. It is from such circumstances that the variety of tenure and customary law proceeds. To account for this variety, a knowledge of them is requisite; nor is it until every part of the system is developed that it can be fully understood. The most trifling cause is discovered to be the parent of some important result. If ever these were embodied into a code (and we are justified in assuming such to have been the case), the varied revolutions, which have swept away almost all relics of their history, were not likely to spare these. Mention is made of several princes of the house of Mewar who legislated for their country; but precedents for every occurring case lie scattered in formulas, grants, and traditionary sayings. The inscriptions still existing on stone would alone, if collected, form a body of laws sufficient for an

[26] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 129—131. M. Saint-Martin supposes himself to have discovered the same system among the Parthians. Journal Asiatique, vol. i. p. 65. The reader will find the passage quoted at length in Colonel Tod.

infant community; and these were always first committed to writing, and registered ere the column was raised. The pen has recorded, and tradition handed down, many isolated fragments of the genius of these Rajpoot princes, as statesmen and warriors, touching the political division, regulations of the aristocracy, and commercial and agricultural bodies. Sumptuary laws, even, which append to a feudal system, are to be traced in these inscriptions: the annulling of monopolies and exorbitant taxes; the regulation of transit duties; prohibition of profaning sacred days by labour; immunities, privileges, and charters to trades, corporations, and towns; such as would, in climes more favourable to liberty, have matured into a league, or obtained for these branches a voice in the councils of the state. The setting up of these engraved tablets or pillars, called *seoras*, is of the highest antiquity. Every subject commences with invoking the sun and moon as witnesses, and concludes with a denunciation of the severest penalties on those who break the spirit of the imperishable bond. Tablets of an historical nature I have of twelve and fourteen hundred years' antiquity, but of grants of land or privileges, about one thousand years is the oldest. They became more numerous during the last three centuries, when successful struggles against their foes produced new privileges, granted in order to recal the scattered inhabitants. Thus one contains an abolition of the monopoly of tobacco[27]; another, the remission of tax on printed cloths, with permission to the country manufacturers to sell their goods free of duty at the neighbouring towns. To a third, a mercantile city, the abolition of war contributions, and the establishment of its internal judicial authority[28]."

[27] Which is still a royal monopoly in France.

[28] Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 132—134. In a Royal Grant of Land, in Carnata, verse 22d, mention is made of

To pursue this subject into its details is wholly foreign to our present purpose; we therefore return to the consideration of the general question. When we begin to take a view of political institutions, our wonder is generally most powerfully excited by the very great duration of bad laws. They are, indeed, in most instances, more permanent than good ones; because the latter, adapting themselves to the different conjunctures of the society in which they take their rise, are easily brought to serve as a step or vantage-ground from which to command future improvement; whereas the former frequently ensure their own perpetuity by destroying the germs of improvement, and overshadowing with their enormous growth the abuses which they engender. Not considering this fact, however, political writers sometimes adduce the duration of institutions as a proof of their superior excellence; as if Time respected nothing but what is good.

The monarchical principle has not in India been moulded into any definite form, with some particular function appropriated to each limb or member: it is a monster with many heads. Authority is multiplied, not divided. The sovereign does not separate the affairs of his government into parts differing in their nature, and place at the head of each some officer fitted for and confined to that department; he

"*those obelisks which confer celebrity*, and on which encomiastic verses are engraved by the goddess of Abundance herself." And in his note on the passage, Sir William Jones observes, that it was an ancient custom among the Hindoos, to raise pillars to perpetuate the memory of great events; though the "columns of victory," as they were termed, might generally be regarded as mere monuments of kingly pride or of courtly adulation. "Other columns," says he, "were erected, perhaps, as Gnomons, and others, possibly, to represent the Phallus of Iswara." Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 39, &c. Of the latter kind was that vast column still standing amid the spray of the sea, near the ruins of Mahamalaipoor. Bishop Heber, Narrative, &c. vol. iii. p. 216.

rather breaks up the empire, as it were, into many little monarchies, over each of which he places a governor as absolute within his own jurisdiction as the prince himself. Of these governors the highest was lord of a thousand towns; the next, lord of a hundred; the next, of ten; the next, of five; the lowest, of one town and its district. Each of these lords was amenable for his conduct to the one immediately above, and absolute over all those below him. What was still worse, the monarch could not possess any very effectual check over these his vicegerents; in fact, the only expedient their rude ingenuity could invent, was to maintain spies in every town in the empire. "The affairs of these townships," says Menu, "either jointly or separately transacted, let another minister of the king inspect, who should be well affected, and by no means remiss. In every larger town or city, let him appoint one superintendent of all affairs, elevated in rank, formidable in power, distinguished as a planet among stars. Let the governor, from time to time, survey all the rest in person; and by the means of his emissaries, let him perfectly know their conduct in their several districts[29]."

"Of the practical state of the government," says Mr. Mill, "abundant proof is afforded. In the passage which immediately follows (the one just quoted) it is said: 'Since the servants of the king, whom he has appointed guardians over districts, are generally knaves, who seize what belongs to other men, from such knaves let him defend his people; of such evil-minded servants as wring wealth from subjects attending them on business, let the king confiscate all the possessions, and banish them from his realm[30].'" This exactly resembles the practice of

[29] Institutes of Menu, chap. vii. ver. 120, 122.

[30] History of British India, vol. i. p. 179; Institutes of Menu, chap. vii. ver. 123, 124, and chap. ix. ver. 231.

the Ottoman sultans, who, as soon as a pasha has extorted from his province a sufficient degree of wealth, strangle him and confiscate his riches. But how are the people benefited by this proceeding? We do not learn that, according to the Indian system any more than the Ottoman, any restitution was made to those persons who had been plundered. On the contrary, similar robbers were appointed in the place of the former, and these, having enriched themselves by extortion, were in their turn drained of their wealth by the government, and driven into useless exile.

The king being thus at the head of the government, with all the great lords of the kingdom dependent on him, his power was in reality much greater than was contemplated by the laws; for, as the avarice of the Brahmins seems always to have been as strong or stronger than their pride, it would not be impossible for him, by a proper application of his treasury, to procure their approbation of actions forbidden in the Vedas. His council of seven or eight could neither be of much service to him, nor in any sensible degree embarrass any plans which he might form; for, as he first consulted each separately, and afterwards the whole council assembled,—where every man would maintain, through vanity, his opinion privately given, —he would soon begin to disregard their decisions, or contrive to gain them over to his interests.

But the spirit of a government is more certainly known from the manner in which it punishes real crimes, and from its tendency to lessen or multiply such as are only imaginary, than from any other circumstance whatever. Men enter at first into society that their persons may be more surely protected from violence than they could be in the savage state; and as society creates a kind of adjunct to their persons, which is called property, it is understood that

this also is to be preserved to individuals for their own use and comfort. But as there will always be some who, from imprudence or other cause, will be destitute of property, it is to be feared that they may appropriate to themselves, by mere violence, what the law allows them to obtain only for an equivalent degree of labour. To defend the industrious or fortunate from the attacks of the wicked or unfortunate, lawgivers have devised various modes, all productive of misery or bodily pain to the offending individual. It is clear, however, that the law should not aggravate trivial errors, and, much less, offences against mere decorum, into crimes; as in this case the result, through the inherent frailty of human nature, must be, that a very large proportion of the people will find themselves unawares in the path of criminality; and as the beginning is the half of every thing, will become familiarized with real crimes, from seeing that no distinction is made between those and such as are purely fictitious. Lawgivers transgress the injunctions of nature when they convert indifferent actions into crimes; their duty extends no further than, having observed what actions are prejudicial to society, to endeavour to prevent or punish them. Owing, however, to general ignorance, and the apathy which ignorance engenders, those comparatively few individuals who comprehend the nature of human society are condemned, in almost every nation, to behold murders constantly perpetrated under the sanction of law, in support of rights which nature does not, and which society should not recognize. It is to little purpose that these men raise their voices against this dreadful abuse of power. Ignorance is deaf and sanguinary, especially when girded with authority, and knows of no means of defending its vulgar possessions but hedging them round with a fearful array of terror and punishments.

In no country has this doctrine been more cruelly verified than in India, where it is no exaggeration to say that JUSTICE has ever been an unknown god; unknown alike to the governor and the governed; and, in fact, seeming in the abstract to be above their comprehension. The leading idea in the mind of its first legislators seems to have been, that power is something divine in itself, and paramount over justice and every right of man. Neither recognizing nor comprehending the real claims of human nature, their laws were the mere production of passion, ignorance, and the basest self-interest. In one word, these legislators were Brahmins, whose first object it was to secure to their caste whatever advantages, luxuries, and immunities, it was in their imagination to conceive. The people were nothing but as they were subservient to the priests. "The Brahmin is declared to be the lord of all the classes[31]. He alone, to a great degree, engrosses the regard and favour of the Deity; and it is through him, and at his intercession, that blessings are bestowed upon the rest of mankind. The slightest disrespect to one of this sacred order is the most atrocious of crimes[32]." For contumelious language to a Brahmin, a Sudra must have an iron style, ten fingers long, thrust red-hot into his mouth; and for offering to give instruction to priests, hot oil is to be poured into his mouth and ears[33]. "The most pernicious of all deceivers is a goldsmith who commits fraud; the king shall order him to be cut piecemeal with razors[34]." "Of robbers who break a wall or partition, and commit theft in the night, let the prince order the hands to be lopped off, and themselves be fixed on a sharp stake. Two fingers of a cut-purse, the thumb, and the index,

[31] Institutes of Menu, chap. x. ver. 3.
[32] Mill's Hist. of Brit. India, book ii. c. 2.
[33] Institutes of Menu, chap. viii. ver. 271, 272.
[34] Halhed's Code of Gentoo Laws.

let him cause to be amputated on his first conviction; on the second, one hand and one foot; on the third he shall suffer death[35]." "A thief, who, by plundering his own country, spoils the province, the magistrates shall crucify, and confiscate his goods; if he robs in another kingdom, he shall not confiscate his possessions, but shall crucify him. If a man steals any man of a superior caste, the magistrate shall bind the grass *beena* round his body, and burn him with fire; if he steals a woman of superior caste, the magistrate shall cause him to be stretched out upon a hot plate of iron, and, having bound the grass *beena* round his body, shall burn him in the fire[36]."

The manner in which the laws are at present administered in India is thus described by Orme:— "No man is refused access to the *durbar*, or seat of judgment, which is exposed to a large area capable of containing the multitude. The plaintiff discovers himself by crying aloud, Justice! Justice! until attention is given to his importunate clamours. He is then ordered to be silent, and to advance before his judge; to whom, after having prostrated himself, and made his offering of a piece of money, he tells his story in the plainest manner, with great humility of voice and gesture, and without any of those oratorial embellishments which compose an art in freer nations. The wealth, the consequence, the interest, and the address of the party, become now the only considerations. He visits his judge in private, and gives the jar of oil; his adversary bestows the hog, which breaks it. The friends who can influence, intercede; and, excepting where the case is so manifestly proved as to braud the failure of redress with infamy (a restraint which human nature is born to reverence) the value of the bribe ascertains the jus-

[35] Institutes of Menu, chap. ix. ver. 276, 277.
[36] Halhed's Code of Gentoo Laws, p. 248.

tice of the cause. This is so avowed a practice, that if a stranger should inquire how much it would cost him to recover a just debt from a creditor who evaded payment, he would everywhere receive the same answer; the government will keep one-fourth, and give you the rest. Still the forms of justice subsist; witnesses are heard, but brow-beaten and removed; proofs of writing produced, but deemed forgeries and rejected; until the way is cleared for a decision, which becomes totally or partially favourable in proportion to the methods which have been used to render it such; but still, with some attention to the consequences of a judgment which would be of too flagrant iniquity not to produce universal detestation and resentment. Providence has, at particular seasons, blessed the miseries of these people with the presence of a righteous judge. The vast revenue and reputation which such have acquired are but too melancholy a proof of the infrequency of such a character. The history of their judgments and decisions is transmitted down to posterity, and is quoted with a visible complacency on every occasion. Stories of this nature supply the place of proverbs in the conversations of all the people of Hindoostan, and are applied by them with great propriety [37]."

[37] On the Government and People of Hindoostan, p. 414, 446; Mill's Hist. &c. vol. i. p. 187. An account of the composition and mode of proceeding of an Indian court of justice, conformably with the ancient Hindoo institutions, is given by Mr. H. T. Colebrooke, in the Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. ii. p. 166–196. A curious instance of a trial of a criminal cause in a Hindoo court occurs in the Sanscrit play *Mrichhacati*, or 'the Toy-cart,' translated in Wilson's Theatre of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 143, &c. (2d edit. Lond. 1835.)

Chapter XVI.

FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

Having examined the principal circumstances in the life of a Hindoo, it remains for us to speak of the

> "Last scene of all,
> Which ends this strange eventful history."

When, through disease or accident, the life of a man is despaired of, he is removed from his bed, and placed upon the ground, where his head is shaved and his body washed[1]. In the observance of this ceremony there is some variation. On some occasions the dying man is stretched upon a platform of fresh earth, prepared in the open air, or in an adjoining room or verandah; and the washing is deferred until after death[2]. Sometimes, we are told, the aged Hindoo parent is regarded by the family as an incumbrance and unnecessary expense; in which case he is carried, a living victim, devoted to die, to the banks of the Ganges, or some other holy stream, where his own children fill his mouth and nostrils with mud, and having thus cut off every chance of recovery, abandon him to the mercy of the stream, to become the food of alligators and vultures[3].

In those cases, however, where the patient is suffered to expire in his own house, on the ground or platform of fresh earth, "the Brahmins repeat cer-

[1] Ayeen Acbery, vol. ii. p. 528.
[2] Oriental Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 12.
[3] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 220.

tain prayers over him, and his family bestow charity. Then they plaster the ground with cow-dung, and strew it over with green grass. After which they lay him down on his back on the grass to sleep, with his head towards the north and his feet towards the south." When a tank or river happens to be near, they bear him thither, and place him up to his middle in water. "When his dissolution approaches, they put into his mouth Ganges water, gold, ruby, diamond, and pearl, and place upon his breast a *tulsi* leaf (*Ocymum sanctum*), which the Hindoos esteem holy, and make a mark upon his forehead with a particular kind of earth. They also give away a cow. When he expires, his son, his younger brother, his scholar, and particular friends, shave their heads and beards; some defer it till the tenth day. Then they dress the corpse in a *dhowti* and a winding-sheet[4]."

Those Hindoos who happen, when about to die, to be within a moderate distance of the Ganges, vehemently desire to breathe their last at least within sight of its holy waters. The sick man, therefore, who feels death approach, is borne by his relations on a bed or litter to the sacred river. In some cases persons are carried from a great distance, having been taken from their bed in their last agonies, and exposed to all the inclemencies of the seasons, day and night, until they expire [5].

Captain Williamson, speaking of this Hindoo custom, observes that "no doubt that many who might recover are thus consigned to premature death. The damp borders of the stream, with a burning sun, rarely fail, however favourable the season may be, to put a speedy termination to the sick person's sufferings. But it has often happened that the

[4] Ayeen Achery, vol. ii. p. 528, 529.

[5] Ward, View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 265.

attendants become tired by the delay the poor wretch makes in 'shuffling off his mortal coil,' and, perhaps, with the humane intention of finishing his pain, either place the bed at low-water mark, if the spot be within the flow of the tide, or smear the dying man with the slime of the holy waters, and fill his mouth with the precious mud. When a person has been taken to the side of the Ganges, or other substituted water, under the supposition that he is dying, he is, in the eye of the Hindoo law, dead; his property passes to his heir, or according to his bequest; and in the event of recovery, the poor fellow becomes an outcast; not a soul, not even his own children, will eat with him or afford him the least accommodation; if by chance they come in contact, ablution must instantly follow. The wretched survivor from that time is holden in abhorrence, and has no other resort but to associate himself in a village inhabited solely by persons under similar circumstances[6]."

From this custom to that of the Battas of Sumatra, who devour their aged parents, there is but one step. This people, who inhabit the central parts of the island, have long been remarkable for the singularity of their manners, and the horrid custom of anthropophagy, which appears to have subsisted from time immemorial among them. Their cannibalism is confined by Marsden to two cases, that of condemned criminals and prisoners of war; "but they themselves declare that they frequently eat their own relations, when aged and infirm, and that not so much to gratify their appetite as to perform a pious ceremony. Thus, when a man becomes infirm and weary of the world, he is said to invite his own children to eat him, in the season when salt and limes are cheapest. He then ascends a tree, round

[6] Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 221, 222.

which his friends and offspring assemble, and as they shake the tree, join in a funeral dirge, the import of which is, 'The season is come, the fruit is ripe, and it must descend.' The victim descends, and those that are nearest and dearest to him, deprive him of life, and devour his remains in a solemn banquet[7]."

But horrid and detestable as these practices are, they by no means prove, excepting where the murders are committed through interested motives, that the people who perpetrate them are naturally atrocious and cruel. Superstition is alone answerable for the deed. For, among the same people, mothers, long deprived of the possession and endearments of children, yet vehemently desirous of this maternal enjoyment, have been known, under the sanction of a vow, to cast the first-fruits of their bosom into the jaws of the crocodile. In fact, "so contradictory and unaccountable is human nature, even in men of the same nation and caste, that, notwithstanding the above treatment of their aged and infirm parents by the natives of Bengal, I can with pleasure and with truth record, that the generality of Indians, of whatever religious profession, whether Hindoos, Mohammedans, or Parsees, pay a great respect and deference to age:

[7] Leyden, on the Languages and Literature of the Hindo-Chinese Nations, A.R. x. 202. Herodotus, lib. iii. c. 99, speaks of an Indian nation whom he calls *Padaioi*, among whom a similar custom prevailed; and Dr. Leyden supposes that the *Padaioi* of the Greek historian and the modern *Battas* are one and the same nation. And, anticipating the objections of incredulity, he adds—"Neither is it more incredible that the Battas should eat human flesh as a religious ceremony, than that anthropophagy should be practised by the class of mendicants called *Agórah Punt'h*, in Bengal and other parts of India, which is a fact that cannot easily be called in question." As. Res. vol. x. p. 203, 204. A usage similar to that of the *Padaioi* prevailed among the *Massagetæ*. See Herod. lib. i. c. 216.

the hoary head is by them considered 'a crown of glory[8].'"

When the individual who has been borne to the banks of the Ganges is able to see and converse with his friends, they assemble round to pay him their last visit, and bid him an eternal adieu. Some one from among the number, perhaps, addresses him nearly as follows: "O Khoora! do you know me?" "Yes, I do."—"How are you?" "I am well. What need is there that I should stay here, if Ganga will but give me a place?"—"True, Khoora, that is all that is left now." Should the dying man be speaking with a superior, he says, "Through your blessing let me go to Ganga:" if with an inferior, the form is, "Pray for me that I may go to Ganga."

Then, perhaps, the care of those worldly concerns which pursue us to the verge of the tomb intervenes, and he thus disburdens his mind to his friend: "One thing respecting which I am uneasy is, I have not given in marriage my two daughters; here are also five children for whom I have not been able to provide; nor is there so much as ten rupees for my funeral offerings. But you are here; do you contrive that my family may not remain unclean for want of the means of performing these last rites, and see that these two daughters are married to the children of good men." The friend replies, "Oh! Khoora! put away these thoughts; repeat the names of the gods." Another friend perhaps says, "Oh!

[8] Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 222. The amiable author is wrong in regarding these things as unaccountable or contradictory: the man who will cut his own throat (Ayeen Achery, ii. 530), or drown himself in the Ganges, or cast his body under the wheels of the car of Jagannâth'h in the hope of pleasing his gods, cannot be supposed likely to hesitate when he has to decide respecting the superstitious treatment of a dying relative, whose eternal salvation he believes to depend upon the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the rites prescribed.

Khoora, Khoori[9] desires to come and see you; what say you?" If his mind is sufficiently firm to bear up against this last shock, he makes a sign for her to come; if not, he replies, "I am going; what can she do? Here are people to wait upon me; she will only increase grief."

Should the individual remain in this state several days by the side of the river, numerous ceremonies are performed for the good of his soul; the *shâla-grâma* is brought, and, after having gazed upon it, he is assisted in walking round it many times; then salt, clarified butter, rice, peas, oil, cloth, brass vessels, and money are offered to Vishnoo, and bestowed upon the Brahmins; portions of different Purânas are read; and the Brahmins are feasted. If the sick man be a person of property, a messenger is despatched to Gaya, to perform funeral rites in his name; and many thousand rupees are sometimes thus expended in extricating the soul from the Hindoo purgatory. He next rewards his spiritual guide, upon whom a part of the wife's ornaments are generally bestowed; regulates the expenses of his funeral rites at home; bestows land and money on some Brahmin, who is directed to offer up daily worship to the Lingam for the repose of his soul. Should the dying man be a Sudra, he gives a legacy to the Brahmin whom he has called the Son of his Alms. He also directs the division of his property among his children; the sons, according to Hindoo, having equal shares; and makes a separate allowance for the widow. From an address made by a dying Brahmin to his elder brother, some years ago, at Serampore, the following characteristic passage has been selected:—"I have bought a piece of land by the side of the Ganges; you will take care that a flight of steps

[9] *Khoora, Khoori*, uncle, aunt; terms of endearment among the Hindoos, and used when there is no relationship.

may be built; and if my widow should survive, you will cherish her. Two daughters, very young, will be left; you will see that they are provided with every thing necessary, and give them in marriage to Kulîna Brahmins; give to each a house, ornaments according to custom, a thousand rupees ready money, a little land, &c. You will also perform the different ceremonies as usual."

"As death approaches, the relations exhort the sick man, if he is a regular Hindoo, to repeat the names of Nârâyana, Brahma, Ganga, his guardian deity, and those of other gods. If he is a Vaishnava, they tell him to repeat the name of Mahâ-prabhu, Krishna, Râdhâ, &c. The poor call upon different deities indiscriminately. The dying man repeats these names as well as he is able; the relations vehemently urge him to go on calling upon these gods, in which they also join him: eight or ten voices are heard at once thus employed. If the doctor is present, and should declare that the patient is on the point of expiring, he tells them to let him down into the water up to the middle. When there is no doctor, his friends attend to this according to their own judgment. Just before or after being thus immersed, they spread the mud of the river on the breast, &c. of the dying man, and with one of their fingers write on this mud the name of some deity; they also pour water down his throat; shout the names of different deities in his ears; and, by this anxiety for his future happiness, hurry him into eternity; and, in many cases, it is to be feared, prevent recovery, where it might reasonably be expected. If the person, after lying in the water some time, should not die, he is brought up again, and laid on the bank, and the further progress of the disease is watched by the relations. Some persons who are carried down to the river-side revive, and return

home again [10]; but scarcely any instances are known of persons surviving after this half immersion in water. In cases of sudden and alarming sickness, many are actually murdered by these violent means of sending men to Ganga. If a Hindoo should die in his house, and not within sight of the river, it is considered as a great misfortune, and his memory is sure to be stigmatized for it after death [11]."

On the death of a near relation it is customary for the women to approach the corpse, uttering loud and mournful cries. These wailings, however, are the effect of passionate grief, and not, as in the case of the Roman *Præficæ*, elicited by the expectation of gain; upon which a pious, but over-zealous writer, founds an unnecessary reproach against the Hindoos, observing that they have neither strength of mind nor Christian principles to serve as "an anchor to the soul" amidst the storms of life. But true religion, pitying the sufferings of human nature, tolerates the indulgence of grief, which is not, as some have believed, rebellion against the providence of God, but an evidence that the divine gifts were highly valued, and regret that we should not have deserved to possess them longer. When the mourner is a mother, overwhelmed with grief for the death of her child—and there is no grief more poignant—she sits at the door, or in the house, or by the river-side, and as soon as words come to her relief, utters her anguish nearly in the following language:—

"Ah! my Hari-dâs! Where is he gone?—Ah! my child!

[10] This is inconsistent with the account of Captain Williamson; but far more consonant with the general character of the Hindoos.

[11] Ward, View of the History, Literature, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. i. p. 269, 270.

"My golden image, Hari-dâs, who has taken?—Ah! my child!

"I nourished and reared him. Where is he gone?—Ah! my child!

"Take me with thee:—Ah! my child!

"He played round me like a golden top.—Ah! my child!

"Who shall now drink milk?—Ah! my child!

"Ah! my child; saying Ma! come into my lap!—Ah! my child!"

These funereal lamentations are frequently so loud as to be audible from a great distance. Sometimes the expression of grief is more violent, and accompanied by tearing the hair, beating the forehead, and other indications that the mourner no longer values personal beauty or accomplishments, since the beloved one, on whose account chiefly those possessions were prized, is no more.

As soon as the sick man has breathed his last, and frequently before, preparations are made for burning the body. His son, if he has left one, takes up water in a new vessel, into which, while the priest reads the prayer, he puts linseed and *tulsi* leaves; and having anointed the body with clarified butter, he pours it on his father's head, as a species of ablution. At the same time the different holy rivers are invited, by prayer, to come into the vessel of water, that the deceased may have the merit of having bathed in them all. The old garments are then removed from the corpse, and replaced by new ones, one of which is folded and placed on the body as a poita. An excavation is then made in the earth, and about three hundred pounds weight of wood, sufficient to consume a single body, is erected in the form proper for receiving the corpse. For the rich and great, the funeral pile is composed of lignum aloes and sandal wood; and even the poor man endeavours, on ac-

count of its fragrance, to mingle a little with the common wood of the pile. A Brahmin then recites certain prayers, pours a quantity of clarified butter into the mouth of the corpse, and inserts small grains of gold into his eyes, nose, mouth and ears. When the deceased leaves a son, it is his duty to set fire to the pile, otherwise this is performed by some other near relation [12].

Before the fire is applied, clarified butter and Indian pitch are poured upon the wood. The body, wrapped in a new piece of cloth, is now placed upon the pile, with the face downwards, if a man, and if a woman, the reverse. The head points towards the north. The son, or nearest of kin, " then lights some straw, walks round the pile three times with face averted, and touches the mouth of the deceased with the fire; after which, those present set the pile on fire all round. At this time the heir presents a prayer to the regent of fire, that, whether the deceased committed sin or practised religion, sinned knowingly or unknowingly, he would, by his energy, consume with the body all its sins, and bestow on the deceased final happiness. The fire burns about two hours; the smell is extremely offensive when no pitch is used. Three or four relations generally perform this last office for the dead. When the body is partly burned, it may so happen that some bony parts have unavoidably fallen on the side. These, together with the skull, are carefully gathered, beaten to pieces, and consumed; yet they say that the part about the navel is never consumed, but is always to be found after the rest of the body is burned. This is taken up, rubbed in the mud, and thrown as far as possible

[12] Ayeen Acbery, vol. ii. p. 529; Ward, View, &c. vol. i. p. 273. This is the general practice, but the manner varies in different places. Compare Colebrooke on the Religious Ceremonies of the Hindoos, Asiat. Res. vii. 239, &c.

into the river. At the close, the heir, taking seven sticks, a span long, in his hand, walks round the pile seven times, throwing one of the sticks into the fire at each circumambulation, and then beats the fire with a hatchet seven times. Water is now brought, the whole place washed, and a gutter cut in the ground, that the water from the funeral pile and the Ganges may unite. They then fill a pot with water, cover it with an earthen plate, and put upon the plate eight cowries. They afterwards, with the handle of a spade, break this pot, spill the water, and then crying *Heri-bol!* they depart [13]."

After the libation of water to satisfy the manes of the deceased are finished, the recital of the following sentences is directed by an ancient legislator:— "Foolish is he who seeks permanence in the human state, unsolid like the stem of the plantain tree, transient like the foam of the sea. When a body, formed of five elements to receive the reward of deeds done in its own former person, reverts to its five original principles, what room is there for regret? The earth is perishable; the ocean, the gods themselves pass away: how should not that bubble, mortal man, meet destruction? All that is low must finally perish; all that is elevated must ultimately fall; all compound bodies must end in dissolution, and life is concluded with death. Unwillingly do the manes of the deceased taste the tears shed by their kinsmen: then do not wail, but diligently perform the obsequies of the dead [14]."

Sometimes the widow, voluntarily, or urged thereto by her relations, signifies her intention of accompanying her husband in death, and is consumed with his dead body on the funeral pile. This monstrous sacrifice is performed in imitation of an act recorded

[13] Ward, View, &c. vol. i. p. 275.
[14] Asiatic Researches, vol. vii. p. 244.

in the mythology of one of their celestial personages. The father-in-law of Siva having omitted to invite him to an entertainment, *Sati*[13] (whence the corruption *suttee*), to avenge the insult thus offered to her lord, consumed herself in the presence of the assembled gods. Her regeneration and reunion with her husband, as the mountain-nymph *Parvati*,

[13] Yet the goddess lived on little better terms with her husband than did Juno with Jupiter. In fact, Siva was not only unfaithful; he was insolent and cruel; banishing his heroic consort to the murky caverns of Caucasus. Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 634. The Abbé Dubois asserts that the widows of Brahmins no longer burn themselves with the dead bodies of their husbands; but this is either a gross mistake, or refers entirely to the Mysore territories; for, of sixty-three Satis which took place in 1825, in the zillah of Burdwan, no less than thirty were performed by the widows of Brahmins. In the Hooghly district the proportion of Brahmini women, who burned themselves in the same year, was less; being only twenty-six out of one hundred and four. In the former district, several of the women were eighty years old; the greater number were very aged; indeed, with one exception (a Brahmini woman of eighteen), the youngest was twenty-four; and nearly all were in poor circumstances. The same remarks may be applied to those who were burned in the Hooghly district; except that, contrary to the rule, by which it is enacted that no woman can burn herself under *sixteen*, one girl of fifteen was sacrificed. From the numbers who thus destroyed themselves annually during ten years, it would appear that, in 1825, the practice was gaining ground:—in 1815, 72; in 1816, 51; in 1817, 112; in 1818, 141; in 1819, 115; in 1820, 93; in 1821, 95; in 1822, 79; in 1823, 81; in 1824, 91; in 1825, 104. From an attentive examination of these lists, a very favourable idea of the length of human life in Bengal must be formed; for a very large number exceeded threescore years and ten; many performed Sati in their eightieth year; some in their ninetieth year; one in her ninety-ninth; and one at the great age of 105. The number of young women is comparatively small; of those in middle life considerable; but the majority seem to have been old. It should be added that, in many instances, at least, the sacrifice appears to have been voluntary, and made in spite of the remonstrances of relations. Report on Hindoo Widows, p. 34—212.

furnish the incentive to similar acts, says Colonel Tod; but other motives than superstition sometimes, it is to be feared, exert their influence in causing these odious self-immolations. In fact, to accelerate the consent of the widow, her relations sometimes ply her with drugs, which, by confusing the intellect, cause her readily to submit to their desires. And even when such nefarious practices are not resorted to, conjugal affection is far from being the only motive: to say nothing of the condition of a widow, which in India is even more forlorn than in other countries, vanity, inspiring the hope of eternal renown, is a powerful inducement. For women who make this fearful sacrifice are canonized after death; vows are made to them, as to guardian deities; their bones are in many parts collected and interred, and over the spot are erected little pyramids, or monuments, to transmit to posterity the memory of so illustrious a victim of conjugal attachment. "Crowds of votaries daily frequent her shrine, imploring her protection, and praying for deliverance from their evils."

"When a woman of any other caste than the Brahminical declares, gravely and deliberately, that she is desirous of being consumed alive by the side of the dead body of her husband, the matter is conclusive. She cannot afterwards draw back. Her revocation would be disregarded; and if she refused to go to the pile with good will, she would be carried thither by force. It is a prevailing superstition through all India that if a woman, after taking that resolution voluntarily, shall refuse to fulfil it, the whole country in which she lives shall be visited with some dreadful calamity. To inspire her, therefore, with adequate courage, the Brahmins and all her kindred visit her in turn, complimenting her on her heroism, and the immortal glory which she will derive from a mode of

dying which must exalt her in dignity to the gods. They excite her fanaticism by every means which cruel superstition can suggest, and keep up the frenzy of her imagination, until the hour arrives when she is to be led to the funeral pile.

"Then she is decked with all her jewels, and dressed in her finest apparel. Her brow is adorned with the sacred symbol of her caste. Her body is tinged with the yellow infusion of sandal and saffron. Every thing is prepared. Her spirits are roused and kept up to the highest pitch of exaltation that fanaticism and superstition can impart. The procession begins, and she is led to the pile on which she is soon to expire."

But the description of a remarkable *Sati*, which took place, in 1794, in Podupettah, a village of Tanjore, may perhaps serve to convey a clearer conception of the thing than any account of the ceremonies generally performed. The lady was thirty years of age, and, with her husband, belonged to the tribe of merchants. The news of her intention to perform *Sati* having quickly spread around, "a large concourse of people collected from all quarters to witness this extraordinary spectacle. When she who occupied the most conspicuous part had got ready, and was decked out in the manner before described, bearers arrived to bring away the corpse and the living victim. The body of the deceased was placed upon a sort of triumphal car, highly ornamented with costly stuffs, garlands of flowers, and the like. There he was seated, like a living man, elegantly set out with all his jewels, and clothed in rich attire.

"The corpse taking precedence, the wife immediately followed, borne on a rich palanquin. She was covered over with ornaments, in the highest style of Indian taste and magnificence. As the procession moved, the surrounding multitude stretched forth

their hands towards her in token of their admiration. They beheld her as already translated into the paradise of Vishnu, and seemed to envy her happy lot.

"Their progress being very slow, the spectators, particularly the women, went up to her in succession to wish her joy, and apparently desiring to receive her blessing, or at least that she would pronounce over them some pleasing word, and predict their future fortunes. She tried to satisfy them all; telling one that she would continue to enjoy her temporal felicity, and another, that she would be the mother of many beautiful children. She assured one that she was destined to live many years in happiness with a husband that would doat upon her [16]. The next was informed that she would arrive at great honour in the world. These, and equally gracious expressions, she lavished upon all that approached her, and all departed with complete assurance of enjoying the blessings which she promised them. She likewise distributed among them some leaves of betel, which were eagerly accepted, as relics, or something of blessed influence.

"During the whole procession, which was very long, she preserved a steady aspect. Her countenance was serene and even cheerful, until they came to the fatal pile, on which she was soon to yield up her life. She then turned her eyes to the spot where she was to undergo the flames, and she became suddenly pensive. She no longer attended to what was passing around her. Her looks were wildly fixed upon the pile. Her features were altered; her face grew pale; she trembled with fear, and seemed ready to faint away.

"The Brahmins, who directed the ceremony, and

[16] So that conjugal happiness, we see, is not beyond the comprehension of a Hindoo woman, or more uncommon, perhaps, than elsewhere.

her relations, perceiving the sudden effect which the near approach of her fate had occasioned, ran to her assistance, and endeavoured to restore her spirits. But her senses were bewildered; she seemed unconscious of what was said to her, and replied not a word to any one. They made her quit the palanquin; and her nearest relations supported her to a pond that was near the pile, and having there washed her, without taking off her clothes or ornaments, they soon reconducted her to the pyramid on which the body of her husband was already laid. It was surrounded with the Brahmins, each with a lighted torch in one hand, and a bowl of melted butter in the other, all ready, as soon as the innocent victim was placed on the pyramid, to envelope her in fire. The relatives, all armed with muskets, sabres, and other weapons, stood closely round, in a double line, and seemed to wait with impatience for the awful signal. This armed force, I understood, was intended to intimidate the unhappy victim, in case the dreadful preparations should incline her to retract, or to overawe any other persons who, out of false compassion, should endeavour to rescue her.

"At length, the auspicious moment for firing the pile being announced by the Purohita Brahmin, the young widow was instantly divested of all her jewels, and led on, more dead than alive, to the fatal pyramid. She was then commanded, according to the universal practice, to walk round it three times, two of her nearest relations supporting her by the arms. The first round she accomplished with tottering steps; but, in the second, her strength wholly forsook her, and she fainted away in the arms of her conductors, who were obliged to complete the ceremony by dragging her between them for the third round. Then, senseless and unconscious, she was cast upon the carcass of her husband. At that instant the multi-

tude, making the air resound with acclamations and shouts of gladness, retired a short space, while the Brahmins, pouring the butter on the dry wood, applied their torches, and instantly the whole pile was in a blaze. As soon as the flames had taken effect, the living sacrifice, now in the midst of them, was invoked by name from all sides; but, as insensible as the carcass on which she lay, she made no answer. Suffocated at once, most probably, by the fire, she lost her life without perceiving it[17]."

[17] Dubois, Description of the Manners, &c. of the People of India, p. 240—243. In giving an account of the funeral of a Hindoo, Abul Fazl informs us that "all his wives embrace the corpse, and notwithstanding their relations advise them against it, *expire in the flames with the greatest cheerfulness.*" Ayeen Achery, vol. p. 529. And Colonel Tod, taking nearly the same view of the subject, says, "that the stimulant of religion requires no aid even in the timid female of Bengal, who, relying on the promise of regeneration, *lays her head on the pyre with the most philosophical composure.*" Annals of Rajast'han, vol. i. p. 634. The quaint absurdity of Abul Fazl's expression requires no remark; but the grave testimony of Colonel Tod cannot be thus dismissed. Nor, although we have numbers on our side, shall we array testimony against testimony. Admitting, for the moment, that the fact, as regards *composure*, is as represented, we must utterly deny the propriety of bestowing the highly laudatory and approving epithet, "philosophical," upon so monstrous a degree of apathy. *Philosophical* includes the ideas of reflection, prudence, wisdom, virtue, none of which are any way connected with the supposed composure of the Bengal women. But—and Colonel Tod will excuse our scepticism—we are extremely doubtful respecting the fact, supposing that the apparent composure which they sometimes exhibit, is the effect of stupifying drugs, or of real insanity, produced in their weak minds by the terrific apparatus of death. Colonel Tod vehemently advocates the abolition of Satis; but justly thinks that much caution and delicacy are required in the proceeding. It seems clear, however, from various circumstances, that but little danger would attend the prohibition of the practice; and this is the opinion delivered by Mr. Fleming, an Indian judge, before the House of Lords. Report, &c. 1830, p. 72. However, see Bishop Heber's Narrative, vol. i. p. 70—75; Ward, vol. iii. p. 308; and Report on Hindoo Widows, 1830, p. 232.

The voluntary concremation of the widow with the body of her deceased husband is a custom of great antiquity among the Hindoos. Mention of it is made in the Vedas[18], and an instance of it is recorded in the history of the wars between Eumenes and Antigonus: a Hindoo chief in the army of Eumenes had fallen in battle, and his two wives contended for the distinction of following him on the funeral pile[19]. It is remarkable that in the Râmâyana, one of the oldest epic poems in the Sanscrit language, the usage is not alluded to on the occasion of the death of King Dasarat'ha.

The Hindoos neither burn the body of a *Sannyâsi*, nor of an infant that has not cut its teeth, but bury or throw them into the river. The same regulation, with respect to young children, was observed among the Romans, who, when they died before cutting their teeth, buried them in the earth, or beneath the eaves of their houses. The following descriptions of persons are also, in India, forbidden to be burned: such as disbelieve in the Vedas; those who act contrary to their faith; thieves; women who have murdered their husbands; those who have been guilty of any of the five deadly sins; drunkards. When the corpse of the deceased cannot be found, they make an effigy of the body with reeds—a cocoa-nut serving for the head,—and cover over the whole with deer-skin and *palâsa* wood (Butea frondosa). This, says Abul Fazl, they pray over, and burn. A woman found pregnant at the time of her husband's death, is not allowed to burn herself until after her delivery. When the husband dies at a distance from home, the widow may burn herself with his garments, or any thing else which belonged to him.

[18] See Colebrooke, on the Duties of a faithful Hindoo Widow, As. Res. vol. iv. p. 205—215; Rammohun Roy, Translation of several Passages, &c. of the Veds, (Lond. 1832, 8vo.) p. 201, &c.

[19] Diodor. Sic. lib. xix. c. 33, 34.

When the corpse has been burned, the surviving relations and friends dishevel their hair, take off their necklaces, and bathe, each individual leaving on the side of the river, as an offering, two handfuls of Sesam seed. These ceremonies performed, they stand upon a green spot, and the friends of the deceased exhort his relations to bear their loss with patience and resignation; after which the procession moves from the ground, the younger part of the company walking in front. On arriving at the door of the deceased's house, the relations taste a bit of *neemb* leaf (*Melia azadirachta*), which is very bitter, and then enter.

On the expiration of a certain number of days, which varies in the different castes, the person who set fire to the pile performs certain ceremonies on the spot. For a number of days after the funeral, determined by circumstances and the rules of caste, the family of the deceased are accounted unclean, even when the individual has died at a distance, and they have not seen the corpse. At stated periods sacred rites are performed, sometimes at very great expense, and anniversary offerings of flowers and water are made to the manes of the departed; and among the worshippers of the Lingam, who bury their dead, and erect tumuli over them[20], you may frequently see the disciples of Siva strewing leaves of evergreens and sprinkling water over the graves. The cenotaphs of the Rhatore princes are lofty and magnificent; and a priest is selected to perform the rites in honour of the dead.

[20] On the tombs and cemeteries of the Hindoos, see Colonel Tod, vol. i. p. 74, 722, 728, 742, 770, 793; Forbes, vol. i. p. 211.

Chapter XVII.

LITERATURE.

The literature of the Hindoos constitutes so prominent a feature in their state of civilization, and is, in many respects, so closely interwoven with their political and social institutions, that even in a popular treatise like the present some account of it ought not to be omitted.

1. The idiom in which the great majority of the works regarded as classical by the Hindoos are written, is the Sanscrit; a language now no longer spoken, and only surviving, as the Latin may be said still to live among ourselves, as the language of scholars who have acquired a habit of writing or speaking it. Independently of the extensive portion of oriental literature, to which the Sanscrit is the key, it is of importance to the philologist, not only on account of its highly-polished grammatical structure, but likewise for the sake of its affinity to many ancient and modern languages of Europe and Western Asia (such as the Zend, the Greek and Latin, the Sclavonic and Germanic languages)[1]. Among the Hindoos themselves, the structure of this their ancient

[1] The analogy in the grammatical system of these languages has recently been carefully investigated by Mr. Bopp, of Berlin. Among his various publications on this subject, we shall here only refer to his essay, written in English, on the Analytical Comparison of the Sanscrit, Greek, Latin, and Teutonic Languages, printed in the Annals of Oriental Literature, No. I. p. 1—65; and to his 'Comparative Grammar,' published in German (Vergleichende Grammatik, &c.); the first part of which appeared at Berlin, 1833, 4to.

and classical tongue seems, from an early age, to have attracted the attention of learned men. They have, with an ingenuity which claims our admiration, reduced the greater part of the words of the language to a limited number of verbal roots, almost exclusively monosyllabic, which they have classed in alphabetic lists, explaining the meaning of each, and briefly pointing out the rules according to which it is to be inflected. They have further, with great accuracy, determined the principles upon which from these verbal roots nearly all the substantives and adjectives of the language are derived, by means of *primary* or *secondary* affixes; they have laid down precise rules for the declension of nouns, classed according to their final letters, for the derivation of feminine from masculine words, for the degrees of comparison of adjectives, and for the formation of compound nouns, the exuberance of which constitutes one of the prominent characteristics of the Sanscrit language.

Other writers have collected the words of the language into dictionaries, for the most part arranged in verse, to be committed to the memory; synonymous words being collected into one or more verses, and placed into chapters, according to the variety of the subjects; and others, finally, have investigated the rules according to which the measure of verse, in sacred or profane poetry, is defined. Works on grammar, lexicography, and metrics form altogether one of the main branches of Sanscrit literature.

Pânini, usually considered as the father of Sanscrit grammar, lived in so remote an age, that he ranks amongst those ancient sages whose fabulous history occupies a conspicuous place in the Purânas, or Indian theogonies[2]; yet in the *sûtras*, or grammatical aphorisms, attributed to him, no less than ten earlier Hindoo grammars are occasionally mentioned. The

[2] Asiatic Researches, vol. vii. p. 202.

aphorisms of Pânini are near four thousand in number; but they are not well arranged, and their studied brevity renders them in the highest degree obscure. Many commentaries were therefore composed by ancient grammarians to elucidate the text of Pânini. Later writers have altered the arrangement of Pânini's rules, so as to bring into one view the precepts relating to the same subject: the *Prakriyâ Kaumudî*[3] and the *Siddhânta Kaumudî*, both compiled within a few centuries past, are the principal works of this kind. These two treatises, besides another entitled *Saraswati Prakriyâ*, and the *Mugdhabôdha* of Vôpadeva, are the grammars now most generally used in the schools of the Hindoos.

To Pânini is also ascribed the earliest extant *dhâtupâta*, or list of verbal roots, with brief references to the rules of etymology. Treatises of this kind exist in considerable number, and are considered as supplements to the system of grammar. The *Kavikalpadruma* of Vôpadeva, a metrical catalogue of verbs alphabetically arranged, appears to be the most popular.

The standard work on Sanscrit prosody is attributed

[3] The *Prakriyâ-Kaumudî* "proceeds from the elements of writing to definitions; thence to orthography: it afterwards exhibits the inflections of nouns, according to case, number, and gender; notices the indeclinables, and proceeds to the uses of the cases: it subjoins the rules of composition by which compound terms are formed; the etymology of patronymics, and other derivations from nouns, &c. In the second part it treats of the conjugation of verbs, arranged in ten classes: to these primitives succeed derivative verbs, formed from verbal roots, or from nouns. The rules concerning different voices follow: they are succeeded by precepts regarding the use of the tenses; and the work concludes with the etymology of verbal nouns, gerunds, supines, and participles. A supplement to it contains the anomalies of the dialect in which the Veda is composed." Colebrooke, in the Asiat. Res. vol. vii. p. 208, 209. The arrangement of the *Siddhânta Kaumudî* is nearly the same.

to Pingala, a fabulous being, represented by mythologists in the shape of a serpent. Like the grammar of Pânini, it consists of *sûtras*, or brief aphorisms, which have been interpreted by various commentators. They "are collected into eight books; the first of which allots names, or rather literal marks, to feet consisting of one, two, or three syllables. The second book teaches the manner in which passages of the Vedas are measured. The third explains the variations in the subdivision of the couplet and stanza. The fourth treats of profane poetry, and especially of verses, in which the number of syllables, or their quantity, is not uniform. The fifth, sixth, and seventh exhibit metres of that sort which has been called monoschemastic, or uniform, because the same feet recur invariably in the same places. The eighth and last book serves as an appendix to the whole, and contains rules for computing all the possible combinations of long and short syllables in verses of any length [4]."

The most esteemed original dictionary of the Sanscrit language is the *Amara Kôsha*, or Thesaurus of Amarasinha, who is calculated to have flourished towards the end of the fifth century of our era. It contains only about ten thousand different words; the insertion of derivatives, not deviating from their natural import, having been deemed superfluous. It has been frequently commented upon by scholiasts, who have explained the derivations of the nouns, and supplied the principal deficiencies of the text. Many other vocabularies exist, partly written on a different plan, and calculated to supply the occasional defects of the *Amara Kôsha*.

The Sanscrit apparently forms the basis [5] of most

[4] Colebrooke, As. Res. vol. x. p. 390, 391. (8vo. edit.)

[5] A very considerable proportion, at least of the words of the languages of northern India, may be traced back to the Sanscrit.

of the dialects now spoken in the northern parts of India, especially of the Bengali, the Hindi, the Hindoostani, the Mahratti, &c.; but it is entirely distinct from the Tamul, which occupies nearly as conspicuous a rank among the languages of the Dekkan as the Sanscrit does among those of the northern provinces[6]. "The Tamul language is spoken by a population of more than four millions, being current in the southern portion of the peninsula of India, throughout the Jaghire, the districts of South Arcot, Salem, Coimbatoor, Combaconum, Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Madura, Dindigal, and Tinnivelly, as well as in many parts of the extensive kingdom of Mysore. It is not derived from any language at present in existence, and is either itself the parent of the Teloogoo, Malayâlam, and Canarese languages; or, what is more probable, has its origin in common with these in some ancient tongue, which is now lost, or only partially preserved in its offspring. In its more primitive words, such as the names of natural objects, the verbs expressive of physical action or passion, the numerals, &c., it is quite unconnected with the Sanscrit; and what is thence so largely borrowed, when the Tamuls, by intercourse with the more enlightened people of the north, began to emerge from barbarity, has reference to the expression of moral sentiments and abstract metaphysical notions, and is chiefly to be found in the colloquial idiom. In this remarkable circumstance, and also in the construction of its alphabet, the Tamul differs much

[6] "The three principal languages of southern India are the Teloogoo, the Tamul, and the Carnataca. The first is spoken in the provinces to the northward of Madras; the second to the southward; the third to the westward, or the table-land above the passes of the mountains; and also in some districts below the Ghauts, on the western side of the Peninsula." John M'Kerrell's Grammar of the Carnataca Language, (Madras, 1820, 4to.) Preface, p. i.

from the other languages of the south, which are found to admit the Sanscrit more largely in literary and poetical compositions, than in the ordinary dialect of conversation, and which adopt the arrangement of the Sanscrit alphabet with scarcely any variation. The higher dialect of the Tamul, on the contrary, is almost entirely free from Sanscrit words and idioms; and the language retains an alphabet which tradition affirms to have heretofore consisted of but sixteen letters, and which, so far from resembling the very perfect alphabet of the Sanscrit, wants nearly half its characters, and has several letters of peculiar powers[7]."

The first person who wrote a treatise on the Tamul dialect is supposed to have been an ascetic named Agattiyan (Agastya?). He dwelled in a mountain called Podiamalai, in the south of the Peninsula; and hence the Tamul language has obtained the name of the *Southern*, while the Sanscrit is termed the *Northern*, from the supposition that it came from the northward. Different authors have preserved a few of the rules laid down by Agattiyan; but his own works are lost. After his time many other persons composed treatises on this dialect; but these have likewise perished. The principal grammar now extant is ascribed to a devotee named Pavânanti. It is denominated *Nannûl*, i. e. Literæ humaniores, and comprises five parts: 1. On Pronunciation and Orthography; 2. On Words—the noun, verb, and other parts of speech; 3. On Syntax; 4. On Prosody and Versification; 5. On Tropes and Figures of Speech[8].

[7] Benj. Babington, Preface to the Adventures of Gooroo Paramartan. Lond. 1822, 4to. p. 1, 2.

[8] See Beschi's Introduction to his Tamul Grammar, translated by B. G. Babington, (Madras, 1822, 4to.) p. ix. x.

2. The Vedas are in every respect the most important work of the ancient literature of the Hindoos. They are the basis of their religion, and are appealed to as the foundation of all their social and political institutions. Only a small portion of them has hitherto been drawn to light, and, up to the present moment, the principal source of our information respecting them is a dissertation by Mr. Colebrooke, printed in the eighth volume of the Asiatic Researches.

The name *Veda* properly implies 'knowledge.' The ancient writings so designated are four in number, called the *Rig-*, *Yajur-*, *Sâma-*, and *At'harvana-Veda*; but the At'harvana-Veda is considered more modern than the other three. The present arrangement of the Vedas is attributed to the ancient sage Vyâsa, who, according to the tradition, taught the several Vedas to as many disciples, viz. the Rig-Veda to Paila, the Yajur-Veda to Vaisampâyana, the Sâma-Veda to Jaimini, and the At'harvana to Sumantu. "Each Veda consists of two parts, denominated the *Mantras*, or prayers, and the *Brâhmanas*, or precepts. The complete collection of the *Mantras* (or hymns, prayers, and invocations) belonging to one Veda is entitled its *Sanhitâ*. Every other portion of Indian scripture is included under the general head of divinity (*Brâhmana*). This comprises precepts which inculcate religious duties, maxims which explain those precepts, and arguments which relate to theology[9]."

The whole of the Indian theology is professedly founded on tracts, likewise considered as parts of the Vedas, and denominated *Upanishads*. The proper meaning of this designation is doubtful: it is usually supposed to signify "mystery;" but neither the ety-

[9] As. Res. vol. viii. p. 387, 388. Compare Transact. of the Roy. As. Soc. vol. i. p. 448, 449.

mology nor the usual acceptation of the word seems to warrant this interpretation [10].

The Mantras, or prayers, are the principal portion of each Veda, and apparently preceded the Brâhmanas. Those of the Rig-Veda are metrical, and are recited aloud; those of the Sâma-Veda are chanted with musical modulation; those of the Yajur-Veda are in prose, and are inaudibly recited. A table of contents, appended to the several Sanhitâs, states the name of the author of each prayer, that of the deity or being invoked, and if the prayer be in verse, the number of stanzas and the metre. Indra, or the firmament, fire, the sun, the moon, water, air, the spirits, the atmosphere, and the earth are the objects most frequently addressed [11]. Several specimens of hymns from various Vedas have already been given in the chapter on the religion of the Hindoos [12]; we shall therefore here confine ourselves

[10] As. Res. vol. viii. p. 472. The Upanishads were translated into Persian by Sultan Dârâ-Shekûh, the eldest son of the Mogol emperor, Shâh-Jehân, and brother of Aurungzebe; who was born A. D. 1615, and was killed by Aurungzebe's order in A. D. 1659. This Persian translation was again translated into Latin by Anquetil du Perron. (*Oupnekhat, id est, Secretum tegendum*, &c. Paris, 1801, 2 vols. 4to.) A free translation from the Sanscrit original of four of the shorter Upanishads may be found in Rammohun Roy's 'Translation of several principal Books, &c. of the Veds.' London, 1832, 8vo.

[11] "Every line," observes Mr. Colebrooke, in speaking of the prayers of the Rig-Veda, "is replete with allusions to mythology; not a mythology which avowedly exalts deified heroes (as in the more recent legendary poems of the Hindoos), but one which personifies the elements and planets, and which peoples heaven and the world below with various orders of beings." Mr. Colebrooke proceeds to say, that he has not remarked in these hymns any thing that corresponds with the favourite legends of those sects which worship either the *Linga* or *Sacti*, or else Râma or Krishna. See As. Res. vol. viii. p. 398.

[12] Vol. i. p. 146, 147, 151, 153, 156.

to the insertion of Mr. Colebrooke's literal translation of a single prayer from the Rig-Veda [13].

"Guardian of this abode! be acquainted with us; be to us a wholesome dwelling; afford us what we ask of thee; and grant happiness to our bipeds and quadrupeds. Guardian of this house! increase both us and our wealth. Moon! while thou art friendly, may we, with our kine and our horses, be exempted from decrepitude: guard us as a father protects his offspring. Guardian of this dwelling! may we be united with a happy, delightful, and melodious abode afforded by thee: guard our wealth now under thy protection, or yet in expectancy, and do thou defend us."

Some curious extracts from the Brâhmanas of the various Vedas, and from the Upanishads, may likewise be found in Mr. Colebrooke's Essay [14]. Want of room prevents us from inserting any of them as a specimen.

The language in which a considerable portion of the Vedas, especially the prayers or hymns, are written, is an obsolete, and frequently very obscure dialect, standing in a similar proportion to the common Sanscrit, as the Latin of the twelve tables to the language of Cæsar. Numerous brief remarks on this ancient dialect are scattered throughout the grammatical work of Pânini, whence later writers have extracted and arranged them, elucidating them by examples and comments. Two of the most esteemed commentaries on the Vedas are the grammatical gloss of Sayanâcharya, extending over the

[13] It was, according to the legend, uttered by Vasisht'ha, to lay asleep a dog who was barking at and attempting to bite him, when coming at night to the house of Varuna. As. Res. vol. viii. p. 401.

[14] Asiatic Researches, vol. viii. p. 408, 409—419; 421—427; 440, &c. Ward's View of the History, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. iv. p. 93, &c.

whole body of these ancient writings, and the philosophical commentary of Sancara on the Upanishads only.

The difference of style alone would be sufficient to prove that in the Vedas, as they are now before us, books, treatises, and fragments belonging to different ages are put together. At what period the present arrangement was made, we are as yet unable to determine, since our total want of authentic information respecting the history of India renders it altogether extremely difficult to ascertain the epoch of any of the ancient monuments of Sanscrit literature. From a passage stating the position of the solstitial points, which occurs in a sort of calendar appended to the Rig-Veda, Mr. Colebrooke has drawn the conclusion that this calendar must have been regulated during the fourteenth century [15]; and part at least of the hymns in honour of the several deities, whose festivals this calendar was destined to regulate, now embodied in the Rig-Veda, must then have been already extant.

3. The class of Sanscrit writings next in importance to the Vedas are the *Purânas*, or legendary poems, similar, in some respects, to the Grecian theogonies. The Purânas are said to be composed by Vyâsa, the compiler of the present collection of the Vedas. Each Purâna treats of five subjects: the creation of the universe, its destruction, and the renovation of worlds; the avatâras, or manifestations of the supreme deity; the genealogy of gods and heroes; chronology, according to a fabulous system; and heroic history containing the achievements of demi-gods and heroes. Some of the Purânas, being less obscure than the Vedas, are now very generally read and studied, and consti-

[15] Asiatic Researches, vol. viii. p. 491, &c.

tute the popular or poetical creed of the present Hindoos[16].

Two great epic poems, the *Râmâyana* and the *Mahâbhârata*, are usually classed with the Purânas. The *Râmâyana*, comprising 24,000 stanzas, divided into seven books, and written by the ancient poet Vâlmîki, records the adventures of Râma, an incarnation of the god Vishnu, who was born as the son of Dasarat'ha, king of Oude. The *Mahâbhârata* is said to contain no less than 100,000 stanzas. Vyâsa, the supposed compiler of the Vedas and Purânas, is said to be its author. It records the actions of Krishna, the last and most celebrated of the avatâras of Vishnu[17].

[16] The principal Purânas are eighteen in number: their names are, the Brahma, Padma, Brahmânda, Agni, Vishnu, Garuda, Brahmavaivarta, Siva, Linga, Nâradiya, Skanda, Mârkandeya, Bhavishyat, Matsya, Varâha, Kûrma, Vâmana, and Bhâgavata Purâna. They are reckoned to contain 400,000 stanzas. (Wilson, Mackenzie Collection, vol. i. p. 48.) There are also eighteen *Upapurânas*, or similar poems of inferior sanctity and different appellations. A complete translation of the Vishnu Purâna may be soon expected from Professor Wilson, of Oxford; and another of the Bhâgavata Purâna, from M. Eugène Burnouf, of Paris.

[17] An edition of the Râmâyana, accompanied by an English translation, was undertaken by Messrs. Carey and Marshman, of Serampore, but was discontinued after the two first books had been published. (3 vols. 4to. Serampore, 1806—1810.) A new and critical edition, which will be accompanied by a translation into Latin, by Mr. A. W. von Schlegel, is now in progress: one volume of the Sanscrit text has appeared. (Bonn, 1829, 8vo.) Mr. Wilson, in the introduction to one of the Sanscrit dramas translated in his 'Theatre of the Hindoos' (vol. i. p. 278—283, 2d edit.), has given a condensed account of the story of Râma as told in the poem of Vâlmiki. An abstract of the contents of the Mahâbhârata may be found in Ward's View, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. iv. p. 429—449. (3d edit. Lond. 1820, 8vo.) One of the most beautiful episodes of the Mahâbhârata, the history of king Nala and his wife Damayanti, has been edited, with a literal translation into Latin, by Professor Bopp, of Berlin. (2d edit. Berlin, 1831, 4to.)

4. Books on law constitute another important branch of Sanscrit literature. The treatises coming under this designation may be divided into two classes: some consist of maxims or precepts, usually expressed in verse, put together into codes of greater or less extent, and attributed to various ancient sages, as their original and inspired authors; others consist either of comments on these traditional texts, elucidating and amplifying their import, and solving such difficulties as arise from apparent contradictions in different passages; or of systematic treatises, in which the several topics of Hindoo jurisprudence are discussed according to logical arrangement, and passages from the ancient lawgivers are adduced in support of the doctrines advanced.

The most distinguished work extant of the first class is undoubtedly the code generally known under the title of the Institutes of Menu. Numerous compilations of a similar nature exist, which are attributed to Gôtama, Nârada, Sankha, Likhita, Kâtyâyana, Yâjnawalkya, and other ancient sages. Among the commentaries on their codes, we shall here only mention the gloss of Kullûkabhattâ on the laws of Menu, and the ample commentary of Vijnânêswara on the Institutes of Yâjnawalkya, known in India under the title of the *Mitâkshará*: the latter work is the principal law-authority, now followed by the Hindoo lawyers officially attached to the courts of justice in the Dekkan, and in the western provinces of Hindoostan[18]. Among the works on jurisprudence arranged on a free system, independent from the accidental succession of topics in the ancient compilations of legal precepts, we may notice the *Vîramitrôdaya* of Mitramisra, the *Dâyabhâga* of

[18] Rammohun Roy's Judicial System of India, p. 48.

Jîmûtavâhana, and the Digest of Jagannât'ha, as some of the most generally known[19].

5. The two great epic poems of the Hindoos, the Râmâyana and the Mahâbhârata, have already been noticed. Both are written in a remarkably easy and natural kind of verse, and in a language which, though sometimes highly expressive and energetic, generally bears the character of the simplest narrative, and the tone of common conversation. There are, however, other Sanscrit poems, evidently belonging to a more modern age, and written in a style of artificial refinement, both as to language and versification. Six of these are distinguished among the Hindoos by the name of the 'Great Poems[20]:' they are the *Kirâtârjunîya*, by Bhâravî, which relates the combat of Krishna with Siva, in the disguise of a Kirâta or mountaineer; the *Sisupâlabadha*, by Mâgha, the subject of which is the death of Sisupâla, king of the Chedis, slain in war by Krishna; the *Naishadhîya*, a poem founded on the story of Nala and Damayanti, in the Mahâbhârata, by Srîharsha; the *Raghuvansa*, a poetic history of the family of Raghu, in which Râma was born, by Kâlidâsa[21]; and the *Mêghadûta*, or cloud-messenger, and the *Kumârasambhava*, an unfinished poem on the origin of Kumâra, the son of Pârvatî, by the same author. Besides these, the *Gîtagô-*

[19] The two latter works are translated by Mr. Colebrooke.

[20] See Mr. Colebrooke's Dissertation on Sanscrit and Prâcrit Poetry, in the Asiat. Res. vol. x. p. 389, &c., where further information concerning the 'Great Poems' may be found.

[21] An edition and translation of this work was published two years ago, by the London Oriental Translation Committee, under the following title: *Raghuvansa, Kâlidâsæ carmen, Sanscrite et Latine edidit* A. Stenzler, Lond. 1832, 4to. A translation of the Kumârasambhava, by the same editor, is announced as preparing for the press.

vinda of Jayadêva[22]; the three *Satacas*, or hundreds of sentences, or lyrical aphorisms on various subjects, of Bhartrihari[23]; the erotic stanzas of Amaru, and the short lyrical poem called *Ghatakarparam*, by an unknown author, are much admired for the harmoniousness and elegance of their style.

6. The dramatic literature of the Hindoos became first known to the literary public of Europe through the translation of one of its greatest ornaments, the play of *Sacuntalâ*, by Sir William Jones. More than twenty years had, however, elapsed before another Sanscrit drama was made accessible to European readers; and the translation of the dramatised allegory, called *Prabôdha Chandrôdaya*, or 'Rise of the Moon of Intellect,' by Dr. Taylor, of Bombay, which was published in 1812, was more calculated to throw light on the metaphysics than on the scenic literature of the Hindoos. In 1827, however, Mr. Wilson's English translation of six new plays appeared[24], accompanied with a dissertation on the dramatic system of the Hindoos, and with some account of other extant Sanscrit dramas. Independently of the undeniable poetic merit of many parts, at least, of these compositions, they are highly interesting, as the most genuine pictures of Hindoo manners, and of the condition of society in Hindoostan previous to its conquest by foreign invaders. It deserves to be noticed, as a striking peculiarity of the Hindoo dramas, that different forms of speech are employed

[22] The Gitagóvinda was translated into English by Sir William Jones, (Works, vol. i. As. Res. vol. iii.)

[23] See *Bhartriharis Sententiæ, et carmen quod Chauri nomine circumfertur eroticum, ed.* P. a Bohlen, Berlin, 1833, 4to.

[24] Select Specimens of the Theatre of the Hindoos, by H. H. Wilson, Calcutta, 1827, 3 vols. 8vo. A new edition of this work has just been published (London, 1835, 2 vols. 8vo.)

for different characters: the hero and the principal personages speaking Sanscrit; but women and the inferior characters using the various modifications of that language, which are comprehended under the term Prâcrit[25]. None of the Hindoo plays at present known can boast of a very high antiquity[26], and nearly all appear to have been composed at a period when the Sanscrit had ceased to be the colloquial medium. "They must therefore," observes Mr. Wilson, "have been unintelligible to a considerable portion of their audiences, and never could have been so directly addressed to the bulk of the population as to have exercised much influence upon their passions or their tastes. This circumstance, however, is perfectly in harmony with the constitution of Hindoo society, by which the highest branches of literature, as well as the highest offices in the state, were reserved for the privileged tribes of Kshatriyas and Brahmins." To the unities of time and place the dramatic poets of India have paid but little attention:

[25] We know nothing in European literature which better corresponds to this distinction between the Sanscrit and Prâcrit parts than the manner in which the Venetian and other local dialects are employed in the Italian comedies of Goldoni.

[26] Câlidâsa, the author of *Sacuntalâ*, is usually supposed to have flourished during the reign of king Vicramâditya (56 B.C.); but Mr. Wilson doubts whether the compositions attributed to him can bear so remote a date. The play called *Mrichhacati*, or 'the Toy-cart,' bears internal evidence of having been written in the time of the prosperity of the Buddhists; and a later date than the first centuries of the Christian era cannot consequently be assigned to it: Mr. Wilson, however, leaves it undecided whether Sûdraca, the royal author to whom this composition is attributed, reigned about one century before, or two centuries after, our era. (Hindoo Theatre, vol. i. p. 5, &c.) Bhavabhûti, the author of two of the plays translated by Mr. Wilson, appears to have flourished in the eighth century. (Hindoo Theatre, vol. ii. p. 4.) Sriharsha, another royal dramatic writer, is calculated to have lived during the earlier part of the twelfth century. (Hindoo Theatre, vol. ii. p. 260.)

they are not, however, destitute of certain rules; and many Hindoo writers have endeavoured to reduce to a system the technicalities of dramatic composition. The Hindoos had no separate edifices appropriated to dramatic representations, nor do they appear to have possessed any complicated scenic apparatus. In the palaces of kings there was a hall or saloon, in which dancing and singing were practised and sometimes exhibited, and this room was fitted up on purpose for dramatic entertainments. Plays were only occasionally enacted, at seasons peculiarly sacred to some divinity, or at royal coronations, marriages, and other public occasions; and this circumstance accounts partly for the limited number, and partly for the great length of those Hindoo dramas which have been preserved to us.

7. The popular collection of fables, commonly known in Europe under the name of the 'Fables of Pilpay,' are of Indian origin. The Sanscrit original has now been ascertained to be the *Panchatantra*, a work so called from its being divided into five *tantras*, or sections, and probably compiled in the fifth century of our era. It consists of stories told in prose, but interspersed with moral maxims, and other sentences in verse, many of which have been borrowed from other authors, and can be traced to their original sources[27]. Several Sanscrit abridgments of the Panchatantra exist, one of which is the *Hitôpadêsa*, or 'Salutary Instruction,' known to the European public through the translations of Sir Charles Wilkins and Sir William Jones. The history of the successive translations of the Panchatantra into the Persian (under King Nushirvan, who died A. D. 579); thence into the Arabic (by Abdallah ben Mokaffa, who died A. D.

[27] See Mr. Wilson's account of the *Panchatantra*, Trans. of the Royal Asiat. Soc. vol. i. p. 155, &c.

760), and from thence into the Hebrew, Syriac, Greek, and through the Latin into the modern European languages, has been most satisfactorily traced by the Baron de Sacy, in an elaborate dissertation, printed in the ninth and tenth volumes of the *Notices et Extraits des MSS. de la Bibliothèque du Roi.*

The Arabian Nights were long considered to have been originally composed in the Arabic language; but, latterly, some at least of the most enchanting tales embodied in that collection have been discovered to be of Indian origin, and the Sanscrit source to which they have recently been traced is a voluminous collection of stories known in India under the title of the *Vrihatkat'hâ*[28].

8. But the literature of Europe is indebted to India, not only for these delightful fictions, but likewise for several most useful discoveries in science. The decimal system of the rotation of numerals, now generally in use among us, is an Indian invention, which was probably communicated to the Arabians through the Hindoo mathematicians and astronomers, who visited Bagdad during the reigns of the earlier Abbaside caliphs; and Gerbert of Aurillac, subsequently raised to the papal throne as Pope Sylvester II., (died A. D. 1003,) who had studied in the Arabian universities of Seville and Cordova, in Spain, is usually supposed to have first introduced it into Europe. To the Hindoos the Arabians also appear to be indebted for their first knowledge of algebra. The earliest extant Arabic treatise on algebra[29], confirms by internal evidence the sup-

[28] See the (Calcutta) Quarterly Oriental Magazine, June, 1825, p. 250, &c.; and March, 1824, p. 68, &c. Wilson's Theatre of the Hindoos, vol. ii. p. 138.

[29] By Mohammed ben Musa, who wrote during the reign of the Abbaside caliph Mamûn, in the earlier part of the ninth

position previously entertained by Cossali, Hutton, and others, that the art of solving problems by reduction and equation had not originated among the Arabians, but had been communicated to them from India. The principal Indian writers on algebra and arithmetic generally, are Aryabhatta (in the fifth century of our era), Brahmagupta (who wrote about A.D. 628), and Bhascara (in the twelfth century)[30].

9. Astronomy appears, from an early period, to have been cultivated by the Hindoos for the regulation of time. It seems probable that the astronomy of the Hindoos was originally as independent from that of the Greeks as their early proficiency in algebra; although no doubt can be entertained that, at a period when astronomy had already made some progress among them, they received hints from the astronomical schools of the Greeks[31]. The number of astronomical works in the Sanscrit-language is considerable: the most celebrated among them are the *Sûryasiddhânta* of Varâhamihira, who, to judge from the position of the colures in his work, must have written in the latter part of the fifth century of our era[32]; the *Brahma-siddhânta* of Brahmagupta, who is supposed to have written about A.D. 536[33]; and the *Siddhânta-sirômani* of Bhàscara, which was completed in

century of our era. An edition and translation of his elementary treatise on Algebra was published three years ago by the Oriental Translation Committee.

[30] See Colebrooke's Algebra, with Arithmetic and Mensuration, from the Sanscrit of Brahmagupta and Bhàscara. London, 1817, 4to.

[31] Colebrooke's Algebra, &c., Dissert. p. 24; Whish, on the Origin and Antiquity of the Hindoo Zodiac, in the Transactions of the Literary Society of Madras, part i p. 63, &c.

[32] See Davis on the Astronomical Computations of the Hindoos; As. Res. vol. ii. p. 225—256.

[33] Asiat. Res. vol. vi. p. 586; Colebrooke's Algebra, from the Sanscrit, &c., Dissertation, p. 6.

A. D. 1150[34]. "The Hindoos place the earth in the centre of the world, and make the sun, and moon, and minor planets revolve round it, apparently in concentric orbits, with unequal or irregular motion. For a physical explanation of the phenomena, they imagine the planets driven by currents of air along their respective orbits (besides one great vortex carrying stars and planets with prodigious velocity round the earth, in the compass of a day). The winds or currents, impelling the several planets, communicate to them velocities, by which their motion should be equable, and in the plane of the ecliptic; but the planets are drawn from this course by certain controlling powers, situated at the apogees, conjunctions, and nodes. These powers are clothed by Hindoo imaginations with celestial bodies, invisible to human sight, and furnished with hands and reins, by which they draw the planets from their direct path and uniform progress. The being at the apogee, for instance, constantly attracts the planet towards itself, alternately, however, with the right and left hands. The deity at the node diverts the planet, first to one side then to the other, from the ecliptic; and, lastly the deity at the conjunction causes the planet to b one while stationary, another while retrograde, ar . to move at different times with velocity accelerated or retarded. These fancied beings are considered as invisible planets; the nodes and apogees having a motion of their own in the ecliptic. This whimsical system, more worthy of the mythologist than of the astronomer, is gravely set forth in the *Sûryasiddhânta;* and even Bhâscara gives it, though not without indications of reluctant acquiescence. To explain on mathematical principles the irregularity of the planetary motions, the Hindoo astronomers remove the earth from the centre of the planet's orbit,

[34] Asiat. Res. vol. xii. p. 221, note.

Dyback, an astronomer, calculating an Eclipse.

and assume the motion in that excentric to be really equable, though it appear irregular as viewed from the earth[35]." Mr. Colebrooke, after a minute investigation of the notions of the Hindoo astronomers, concerning the precession of the equinoxes, arrives at the conclusion that on this subject the Hindoos had a theory which, though erroneous, was their own; that they had a knowledge of the true doctrine of an uniform motion in antecedentia, at least 700 years ago, and that they had approximated to the true ratio of that motion much nearer than Ptolemy, before the Arabian astronomers, and as near the truth as these have ever done since[36]. "Their calendar, both civil and religious, was governed chiefly, not exclusively, by the moon and sun, and the motions of these luminaries were carefully observed by them; and with such success, that their determination of the moon's synodical revolution, which they were principally concerned with, is a much more correct one than the Greeks ever achieved[37]."

10. Of doctrines advanced in the various systems of Hindoo philosophy, it would be fruitless to attempt even a brief outline within the limits necessarily prescribed to the present chapter; nor do they appear to have been hitherto sufficiently investigated to admit of their being characterized with precision in a succinct manner. Some of these systems of philosophy are, by the Hindoos, considered orthodox, as

[35] Colebrooke, Asiat. Res. vol. xii. p. 233, 234.

[36] Asiat. Res. vol. xii. p. 220, &c. "Some of the most celebrated Hindoo astronomers, as Brahmagupta, have been silent on the subject of a change in the places of the colures, or have denied their regular periodical motion. Others, as Munjâla and Bhâscara, have asserted a periodical revolution of the colures. But the greater number of celebrated writers, and all the modern Hindoo astronomers, have affirmed a libration of the equinoctial points." Ibid. p. 217.

[37] Colebrooke's Algebra, &c., Dissertation, p. 22.

consistent with the theology of the Vedas; such are the two *Mîmânsâ* schools: others are deemed heretical, as incompatible with the sacred writings of the Hindoos: such are the *Nyâya* and the *Vaisêshika* system; others again are partly heterodox, and partly conformable to the established Hindoo creed; such are the *Sânkhya* and *Yôga*. The two *Mîmânsâs* (for there are two schools of metaphysics under this title) comprise the complete system of interpretation of the precepts and doctrine of the Vedas, both practical and theological. The prior *Mîmânsâ* (*Pûrva Mîmânsâ*, or *Karma Mîmânsâ*), which has Jaimini for its founder, teaches the art of reasoning, with the express view of aiding the interpretation of the Vedas: its scope is the ascertainment of duties and religious observances prescribed in the sacred books. "It is not directly a system of philosophy, nor chiefly so; but, in course of delivering canons of scriptural interpretation, it incidentally touches upon philosophical topics; and scholastic disputants have elicited from its dogmas principles of reasoning applicable to the prevailing points of controversy agitated in the Hindoo schools of philosophy[38]." The latter *Mîmânsâ* (*Uttara Mîmânsâ*, or *Brahma Mîmânsâ*), which is attributed to *Vyâsa*, is usually called *Vedânta*, i. e. "the conclusion, end, or scope of the Veda," and consists in a refined psychology, deduced chiefly from the Upanishads, which goes to a denial of a material world[39].

"The *Nyâya*, of which Gôtama is the acknowledged author, furnishes a philosophical arrangement,

[38] Colebrooke, Trans. Roy. Asiat. Soc. vol. i. p. 19, 439, &c.

[39] See Colebrooke, Trans. Roy. Asiat. Soc. vol. ii. p. 1, &c. Rammohun Roy's 'Translation of an Abridgment of the Vedant,' in his 'Translation of several Books, &c. of the Veds,' p. 1—22. F. H. H. Windischmann, Sancara sive de Theologumenis Vedanticorum. Bonn, 1833, 8vo.

with strict rules of reasoning, not unaptly compared to the dialectic of the Aristotelian school. Another course of philosophy connected with it bears the denomination of *Vaisêshika*. Its reputed author is Kanâde, who, like Democritus, maintained the doctrine of atoms. A different philosophical system, partly heterodox and partly conformable to the established Hindoo creed, is the *Sânkhya*; of which also, as of the preceding, there are two schools—one usually known by that name, the other commonly termed *Yôga*[40]." The former was founded by Kapila, the latter by *Patanjali*. The two schools differ upon one point, which is the most important of all—the proof of the existence of God. The school of Patanjali recognises God, and is therefore denominated the theistical Sânkhya; that of Kapila is atheistical, inasmuch as it acknowledges no creator of the universe, nor supreme ruling providence. The gods of Kapila are beings superior to man; but, like him, subject to change and transmigration[41].

We have, in the preceding remarks, confined ourselves to that portion of the literature of the Hindoos which is written in the Sanscrit language, partly because it is the most important and classical branch of it, and partly because the literature extant in the various vernacular dialects of India has not yet sufficiently been explored. As far as our knowledge at present extends, the majority of the works written in the Hindi, Bengali, Mahratta, Tamul, and Teloogoo

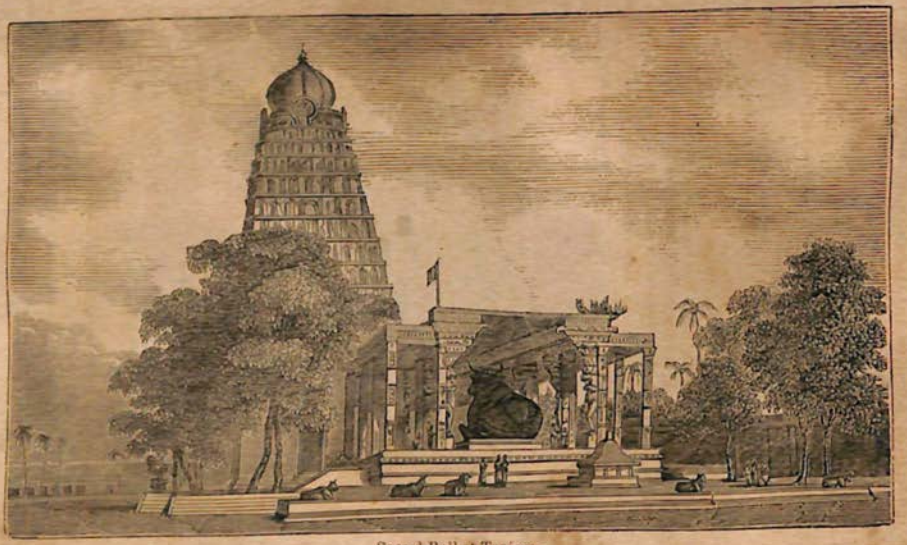
[40] Colebrooke, l. c. vol. i. p. 19.

[41] Colebrooke, Trans. Roy. Asiat. Soc. vol. i. p. 19, 25, &c.; Lassen's Gymnosophista, fascic. i. Bonn, 1832, 4to. Mr. Colebrooke's Essays on the several branches or schools of Hindoo Philosophy have been collected and translated into French by M. Pauthier (*Essais sur la Philosophie des Hindous, par M.* H. T. Colebrooke, &c. Paris, 1833, 8vo.)

languages consists in translations or imitations of compositions in the Sanscrit[42]. It is a remarkable fact, that no strictly historical works of a date anterior to the conquest of northern India by the Mohammedans, have yet been discovered in any Indian language[43].

[42] See Ward's View, &c. of the Hindoos, vol. iv. p. 476–482 (3d edition); Wilson's Catalogue of the Mackenzie Collection, 2 vols. 8vo. Calcutta, 1828; Biographical Sketches of Dekkan Poets, by Cavelly Venkata Ramaswamie, Calcutta, 1829, 8vo.

[43] The only exception to this remark that could perhaps be adduced, is the poetic Sanscrit Chronicle of Cashmere, an account of which is given by Mr. Wilson in the 16th volume of the Asiatic Researches.



Sacred Bull at Tanjore.

Chapter XVIII.

OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF HINDOOSTAN.

From the earliest times to which historical information reaches, an active trade seems to have been carried on between India and the nations of Western Asia, especially the Phœnicians and the Arabs. The principal articles of importation from India were spices and aromatics, precious stones and pearls, silk, cotton, indigo, and other substances for dyeing, steel, &c. The names which several of these articles bear in the Hebrew, the Greek, and other western languages, have recently been found to be derived from the Sanscrit. It appears that foreign nations received and kept the Indian names along with the commodities themselves that were introduced to them from India[1].

Herodotus is the earliest writer who mentions the name of India; but the Indi known to him (lib. iii. c. 98—105) are evidently not the Hindoos who live under the Brahminical law. His northern Indi rather appear to be the inhabitants of Tartary; and the dark-coloured Indi Padæi, who live towards the south, seem to be some of the wild tribes of the Dekkan. Herodotus tells us that, by the orders of Darius Hystaspis, Scylax of Caryanda undertook a voyage down the river Indus. Darius afterwards subdued part of India (lib. iv. c. 44, compare iii. c. 101): but his

[1] See Robertson's Disquisition on Ancient India; Vincent, the Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients in the Indian Ocean (2 vols. London, 1807, 4to.); Heeren's *Ideen über die Politik*, &c. vol. i. part iii. (on India).

conquests can hardly have extended over any part of Hindoostan, as is sufficiently clear from the brief manner in which the Indi are alluded to in the catalogue of the army of his successor Xerxes (Herodot. lib. vii. c. 65); for, on such an occasion, when the strength of all the provinces of the Persian empire was gathered, Indian war-elephants would surely not have been wanting, if any portion of India Proper had been subject to the Persian crown.

About one hundred and sixty years after the reign of Darius Hystaspis, the conquests of Alexander the Great succeeded those of the Persian monarchs. After his final victory over the Persians, he crossed the Indus near Taxila (Attock), and was marching direct towards Hindoostan, when on the banks of the Hydaspes (the modern Jhylum or Behut), king Porus, with a powerful army, opposed him (Arrian, lib. v. c. 8, &c.) The war with Porus, and with other sovereigns of the country, induced Alexander, instead of pursuing his route eastward, to turn more towards the south. But his progress was stopped on the banks of the Hyphasis (the modern Beyah) by the unwillingness of his soldiers to proceed farther; and, returning to the Hydaspes, he passed down the Indus to the sea, whence Nearchus conducted the Macedonian fleet through the Persian Gulf into the Euphrates, whilst Alexander led the army through Gedrosia and Caramania to Babylon.

During the contests of the successors of Alexander, Seleucus, who had obtained possession of Syria and the Persian provinces in Upper Asia, endeavoured to extend the acquisitions made by the Macedonians in India by an expedition against the Prasii, but was checked in his career by a threatened attack from his rival Antigonus, and concluded a peace with the Prasian sovereign Sandracottus (Chandragupta). He subsequently sent Megasthenes, an officer who

had accompanied Alexander in his expedition into India, as ambassador to the court of the Prasian monarch, and Megasthenes, in that capacity, resided several years at Palibothra, on the Ganges. During the reign of Seleucus (321—281, B. C.) the possessions of the Macedonians in India seem to have remained unimpaired; but the embassy of Megasthenes to king Sandracottus, and another of Deimachus to his successor Allitrochidas, are the last transactions of the Seleucidæ with India of which any information has reached us. It is probable that they lost their possessions in India soon after the death of Seleucus. But the Greeks of the Bactrian kingdom, which made itself independent of the dominion of the Seleucidæ, and lasted from the year 254 till 126, B. C., continued to maintain an important commercial intercourse with India, and several of their kings made acquisitions of territory there, which were more extensive than those of Alexander himself. The Bactrian kingdom was overthrown by an irruption of a Tatar tribe, known to ancient geographers and historians under the name of the Indo-Scythians, who established a dominion which seems to have extended from the Jaxartes to the banks of the Indus: but we have no information about its history, nor even about the time during which it continued.

We have already remarked, while speaking of the origin of the Hindoos, that of what may properly be called the ancient history of the race, little or nothing is certainly known. The Brahmins, no doubt, pretend to possess a very exact knowledge of the events of their early history. If we might believe them, or those who have taken them for guides, it is quite possible to distinguish, through the medium of mythological fictions, eminently wild and extravagant, the precise complexion of times bordering on the deluge, or even on the creation. But, though so intimately

conversant with the personages and occurrences of those remote ages, their historical documents become more and more scanty as they descend nearer their own times, and at length desert them entirely. In other words, the ancient history of India is a fiction, based in some instances, perhaps, on tradition, but more generally devoid of all other foundation than the inventions of the Brahmins.

According to Rhadacant Pandit, who assisted Sir William Jones in his chronological researches, the posterity of Menu-Satyavrata separated itself into two principal branches, of which the first, springing from Ikshwâku, was called the "Solar Race," and reigned at Ayodhia, or Oude. The second, or "Lunar Race," sprang from the marriage of Ila, the daughter of Menu, with Buddha, the son of the Moon. In the wars of these renowned families we find the gods personally engaged, and the events correspond but too well with the actors. About the commencement of the fourth age of the world a new kingdom was founded in Mâgadha, or Bahar, by Jarasandha, appointed governor of the province by a sovereign of the Lunar race. The great work began by Jarasandha was completed by his son Sahadêva. Under the repeated attacks of the princes of Mâgadha, the Solar and Lunar races at length sunk, and all India became the prey of the conquerors. But the possession of power corrupts and enfeebles. Twenty generations sufficed to exhaust the energies of the new race of kings, the heir to the last of whom was cut off by the usurper Pradyota, contemporary with the second Buddha. The family of this usurper possessed the throne during a period of five hundred years, when assassination again caused the sovereign power to pass into another house; but the patience or the wickedness of mankind was now become less enduring; a hundred and thirty-seven years ex-

hausted their forbearance; murder was again resorted to, and the throne passed into another family. But the new race of princes was found no less intolerable than the old; a Sudra, impatient at the tyranny of the superior castes, put in practice the usual method of acquiring power, assassinated his master, ascended the throne, and transmitted it to his posterity.

Others, following different traditions, or inventing for themselves, give highly discordant versions of this ancient story; and in the midst of these discrepancies and contradictions we arrive at the era of Vicramâditya. At the commencement of this period the diadem rested, it seems, on the brow of a man called Râjapâla, who was attacked and subdued by a mountain prince, on whom the Brahmins have bestowed the name of Sâkâditya. His reign was not of long duration. At the end of fourteen years he was subdued by Vicramâditya, a prince whose memory is still dear to the Hindoos; but, after adding numerous provinces to his empire, and which was much more honourable to his character, encouraging letters and the arts, this celebrated man was himself defeated and slain by Sâlivâhana, Rajah of the Dekkan. These events took place—for of these matters history speaks with some degree of certainty—in the century preceding the Christian era.

The posterity of Vicramâditya was not, however, immediately excluded from sovereign power; for Sâlivâhana, satisfied with having rendered himself independent, retired beyond the Nerbuddah, leaving to Vicrama-Sena the possession of the throne of Oojein. But a usurper arose, who shortly after set aside the line of Vicramâditya; and it was one of the princes of this line that founded or rebuilt the city of Delhi. According to the Persian historians of India, the whole country fell, after the death of Vicramâ-

ditya, into confusion and anarchy, each great vassal of the crown seizing upon the province over which he had been placed, and assuming the state and appellation of sovereign; so that the very memory of the emperors or mahârâjas was quickly lost. It is little to be regretted that history has not preserved from oblivion the petty wars which must necessarily have arisen in such a state of society. It much more imports us to know that the commerce which India already carried on with Arabia and Egypt, and through those channels with all the western world, had even at this early period, reached a high degree of prosperity. Hippalus, or Annius Plocamus, according to Pliny, had, by the discovery of the monsoon winds, greatly facilitated the intercourse of the western nations with India; and the Romans, who from conquerors had now become merchants, engaged in this traffic as the rivals of the Egyptians and Arabs.

Here the Brahmins, who speak with so much familiarity of Satyavrata and the Deluge, find their historical documents suddenly fail them. During a space of three hundred years they know not who reigned, who was murdered, or who died in his bed. Even tradition, which frequently amuses with probabilities where history has no truths to offer, is here dumb. All we know of this long period of darkness is, that in the reigns of Trajan and Antoninus, ambassadors from some part of India traversed the Roman empire to the capital, awakening, at least in the former of these princes, the vain regret that he could not, like Alexander, carry his victorious arms into that remote country. At the expiration of three hundred years Basdeo appeared, who, having subdued Bahar and Bengal, was saluted by his subjects with the title of Mahârâjah, and restored the faded splendour of Canouj. It is said,

that during the reign of this prince, Bahram, king of Persia, visited India in the disguise of a merchant, with the intention of studying, in this condition, the government and religion of the country. An accident revealed his rank. Walking one day in the environs of the Canouj, he was attacked by an enraged elephant. Bahram, practised in the use of arms, immediately threw a javelin at the animal, with so much force and dexterity that the weapon pierced its forehead, and killed it on the spot, which being related to the emperor, he commanded the merchant to be conducted into his presence. No sooner was Bahram introduced than he was recognized by a Rajah, who had formerly visited Persia. Upon this Basdeo descended from his throne and embraced the stranger, who, on confessing the truth, was entertained with the greatest magnificence. In order to cement their friendship still further, Basdeo bestowed his daughter in marriage on the Persian monarch.

The descendants of Basdeo possessed the throne during a period of eighty years, when, to ward off the calamities which in despotic governments always arise out of a minority, the sovereignty was bestowed on Râmadeva, a Rahtore prince, renowned for his wisdom and bravery. His reign was chiefly consumed in repressing the turbulence of the inferior rajahs, and in extending the limits of his dominions. He possessed the sceptre for fifty-four years, and left behind him at his death the reputation of one of the greatest princes that ever reigned in India, notwithstanding which he still continued, if we may believe Ferishta, to compliment the king of Persia with the usual tribute. After his death numerous pretenders to the throne started up; among whom was Pertâb Chand, commander-in-chief of the imperial forces, who, partly by courage, partly by villany, succeeded

in the perilous enterprise, and, to secure himself in the post he had reached, assassinated all his rivals.

If no power were of long duration but that which is founded in justice, it is probable that few kings would ever transmit their sceptre to their posterity. But in the case of Pertâb Chand, violence was punished with violence. He was no sooner dead than the rajahs were once more up in arms; and having expelled his children, without substituting any person in their place, each petty chief succeeded, as on the death of Vicramâditya, in assuming an independent power, each dreading or scorning the title of Mahârâja. Among these rajahs the most distinguished for talents and fortune were Anandadeva and Maldeva. The former, of the Vaisya caste, at first rendered himself master of Malwah; afterwards, in a short but brilliant campaign, he conquered the province of Berar, the country of the Mahrattas, and the kingdom of Guzerat. Maldeva, a man of obscure origin, but possessing a genius which amply compensated for the want of illustrious birth, rendered himself master of Delhi and its territory. However, Canouj, which once more became the capital of a powerful kingdom, greatly exceeded Delhi in extent, and was said to contain thirty thousand betel-shops, and sixty thousand bands of musicians and singers, who paid a distinct tax to government. But these two empires, which seemed so flourishing and powerful, rose and fell with those who had founded them. Anandadeva reigned sixteen, Maldeva forty years: their deaths were succeeded by anarchy; every petty rajah, who had been held during their lives in subjection, aiming at independence, and the more powerful at conquest and empire. Such was the state of India in the sixth century.

In the mean time Mohammed had effected in Arabia

a revolution, which was destined in its results so profoundly to influence the fate of India. The tide of conquest, spreading from Mecca and Medina, soon rolled over Egypt, Syria, Persia, and the interjacent countries; and impelled by more lasting causes than the Macedonian irruption, necessarily produced more durable impressions. Caubul, Candahar, Cashmere, together with all those provinces that had been possessed by the Greeks of Bactriana, were at this period under the dominion of the Tatars; Lahore, and the other provinces on the left bank of the Indus, though governed by their own princes, were still tributary to the kings of Persia; and though the great rajahs of Canouj, Delhi, and Ajmere, were independent and powerful, they could offer but a feeble resistance, if separately attacked, to the arms of the Musulmans. The Rajpoots, entrenched in their mountain fastnesses, belted round by deserts, and distinguished, moreover, by a passion for freedom, and redoubtable valour, laughed all invaders to scorn, and maintained during twelve centuries a successful struggle against the imperial masters of the plains.

It has been pretended by two Arabian historians, that the Mohammedan arms had penetrated into India so early as the eighth century. The fact is doubtful[2]; but it is unquestionably true, that the commercial intercourse of the Arabs with India had at this time become exceedingly intimate, so that we may safely infer from this and other circumstances connected with the character of the age and people, that the relations of merchants returning from various parts of India, conceived in the inflated marvellous style of the East, had a considerable effect in directing the attention of their warlike countrymen towards the banks of the Ganges. They spoke of the incal-

[2] Orme, however, seems to have given credit to the assertion. History of Military Transactions of Hindoostan, vol. i. p. 9.

culable riches of the country, of its horses, its elephants, its pearls, diamonds, and other gems; of its silks, muslins, perfumes, and spices; of the singular beauty of its women; and lastly, of its monstrous religion, and of the contempt of the inhabitants for Islamism. Pictures such as these, more or less richly coloured according to the genius of the narrator, were admirably adapted for rousing the enthusiasm of soldiers so romantic and adventurous as the Arabs. It was in the same region, likewise, that their writers of fiction chose to lay the scene of their most remarkable tales, in which, whatever is most singular, wild, or magnificent, is of Indian growth.

Still, in spite of all these incentives, the Caliphat had already descended from the zenith of its glory, and been hewn almost piecemeal by its great secular feudatories, before the invasion of India was undertaken by the Musulmans. Of these great feudatories, by far the most powerful was the Samanide prince of Bokhara, one of whose lieutenants resided at Ghizni, or Ghazna, the capital of Cabulistan, in order to watch over the movements of the Afghâns. A minority occurring about the year 961, several pretenders aimed at the throne, among others the brother of the late king. But the interest of the minor prevailed, and Abistaghi, governor of Khorâsân and Cabulistan, who had declared for the uncle, was commanded to repair to Bokhara. Seeing that he had only to choose between rebellion and death, he preferred the former; and being endued with great military talents, succeeded in effecting the independence of his provinces. His son perishing by poison or debauchery in the flower of his age, the sovereignty of the newly created kingdom passed into the hands of Sabuktaghin, a Tatar soldier of fortune, who, together with the sceptre, assumed the title of Naziruddin. Sabuktaghin felt the necessity of employing

his warlike and turbulent subjects. India, with its beautiful climate, and real or imaginary riches, was at hand. He passed the Indus, destroyed many temples and idols of Brahminism, defeated various native armies, who, attacked thus unawares, opposed but a feeble resistance, and returned laden with costly spoils to Ghizni.

Jeypâl reigned at this period over Lahore. Brave, enterprising, politic, he no sooner observed the impetuous temper of these new enemies, than he conceived a project aptly calculated to paralyze their energies. This was nothing less than a repetition of the policy of Scipio, when matched against Hannibal. Collecting together a numerous army, he passed the Indus, and directed his route towards Khorâsân, determined to make the enemy's country the theatre of war. Sabuktaghin, on the other hand, was not idle. His army was soon in the field, and, encamped in the vicinity of the invaders, only waiting for the dawn to commence the conflict. Suddenly a tremendous tempest, attended with thunder, lightning, and hail, burst upon the Hindoo camp; fear seized upon them; they endeavoured to fly; but in the darkness that surrounded them, no man knew whither to direct his footsteps, so that the fugitives either perished in the torrents which rushed down tumultuously from the mountains, or plunged into the abysses which abounded on all sides. When the morning broke, Jeypâl looked about in vain for his army, and was compelled to sue for peace. This Sabuktaghin, whose projects of invasion were not yet ripe, was not unwilling to grant upon favourable terms; but his fiery son Mahmood, who was present at the negotiations, filled with projects of conquest and glory, laboured to prevent the treaty, urging his father to seize on the opportunity offered by fortune, and add India to his dominions. "Well,"

said the Rajah, in a firm tone, "are you desirous of driving us to despair? And do you know what measures the Hindoos have recourse to when reduced to extremities? They shed the blood of their old men, women, and children; the earth and the water swallow up their riches; their houses and their cities are given up to the flames; they then rush amid the ranks of their enemies, determined to die, but perishing in vengeance and slaughter!"

Sabuktaghin, moved by this speech, concluded a peace with Jeypâl, the latter agreeing to pay a large sum of money, and to deliver up fifty of his elephants. On his return to Lahore, however, he refused to fulfil these conditions, pretending that an engagement made under such circumstances was not binding. His council were of a different opinion, but he would not be swayed by their advice. The Tatar, who now with some show of reason maintained that he had justice on his side, immediately gathered together his forces, crossed the Indus, and advanced to meet the enemy, who amounted to upwards of three hundred thousand men. In the battle which ensued the Hindoos were completely defeated, after which Sabuktaghin returned into his own country, laden with the spoil of the enemy, which was immense. He obtained, on other occasions, several smaller victories over the enemies of Ghizni, but returned no more into India. He died, deeply lamented by the Musulmans, in 997, leaving two sons, Ismaïl and Mahmood, who, as soon as his eyes were closed, began a contest for the throne, which terminated by placing the supreme power in the hands of the latter. Ismaïl was made prisoner, and confined in the fortress of Georghan, where he shortly afterwards died.

Mahmood, on ascending the throne, made a vow to the Almighty that he would grant neither truce nor peace to the Hindoos until he should have demo-

lished their temples and destroyed their idols. If there were some fanaticism there was much more ambition in this vow. The grand idol which he desired to overthrow was the political power of the Hindoos, and to effect this purpose, conceived in early youth and cherished under all the circumstances of his life, he exhibited an alacrity, a perseverance, and an enthusiasm which never suffered abatement, and which, in so eminent a degree, belong only to those characters on whom empire, intellectual or physical, necessarily devolves. His preparations, like the enterprise which he was about to undertake, were immense; and these being completed he departed at the head of his forces from Ghizni, and directed his march towards Lahore, about the year 1000 of the Christian era.

It is unnecessary to describe minutely the exploits of Mahmood, whose history was written in blood and fire on the plains of Hindoostan. During his first campaign Jeypál, defeated, made prisoner, and ransomed, sacrificed his own life upon a funeral pile which he caused to be erected. The strong places that fell into his power he secured by numerous garrisons: he defeated the Rajah Bashera, a prince tributary to Lahore; subdued and garrisoned Multan; and diffused so general a terror of his arms that no single state regarding itself as sufficiently powerful to cope with him, a number of the most distinguished princes combined their forces, determined to conquer or perish together. These were the rajahs of Oojein, Gwalior, Canouj, Delhi, and Ajmere, who entered the field at the head of the fairest chivalry of Hindoostan. For many ages India had not seen an army so numerous, so finely appointed, or commanded by such gallant leaders, collected together for her defence. The Hindoos, fighting for their country, were moreover animated by patriotism, by

contempt of their barbarian invaders, and by religious zeal. Opposed to them were military genius, discipline, courage, and a passion for plunder, qualities almost inseparably connected with victory. Accordingly, when the armies came to engage, the Tatar, the Afghan, and the Arab, hardy, enthusiastic, fanatical, bore down every thing before them, though historians, infatuated by a rage for imitation, attribute to fortune an event which, under Providence, seems to have been due to their desperate valour alone. Thirty elephant-load of gold, jewels, and precious stones, with the reputation of being invincible, were the reward of this victory, which was succeeded by an uninterrupted series of success, until the greater part of India was thoroughly subdued. On one occasion Mahmood, after the sack of a city, prepared to destroy the images of the gods, when the principal Brahmins of the temple presented themselves before him, offering a prodigious sum as a ransom for their idols. "No," replied Mahmood, "never shall it be said that I bartered the interests of God for gold!" And, lifting up the axe which he held in his hand, he shattered the image to pieces; when, behold! an incalculable treasure in jewels and precious stones rolled forth upon the floor from the belly of the idol, where they had been concealed by the priests. It may be readily inferred that this incident by no means abated the zeal which animated the Ghaznevide against the representations of Siva and Vishnu. Hindoostan having been conquered and rendered tributary, Mahmood returned once more to Ghizni, where, in 1028, he died at the age of sixty-three, regretting, like many other conquerors, that he had led so absurd and unprofitable a life. He undoubtedly possessed a genius of the first order in politics and war, and was, to a remarkable degree, exempt from those mean and childish qualities which so frequently distinguish

despots. Of genuine wisdom, however, he had, as is apparent from his end, but a very imperfect idea; nor is it, in fact, consistent with the nature of things that philosophy should occupy a despot's throne. Yet, such as he was, few oriental sovereigns have left behind them so imperishable a reputation, or excited among their friends so warm an admiration, or such unrelenting animosity in their enemies.

Mahmood was succeeded by his son Mohammed, a prince of an affectionate, mild character, for whom Massoud, his twin-brother, and elder by a few hours, had been set aside. But Massoud possessed the hearts of the people, and a civil war arising between the brothers, the popular favourite was victorious. Loss of sight and perpetual imprisonment were the penalty paid by Mohammed for having acted the king during a brief interval; and the Ghaznevide empire, which had existed but three generations, already carried in its bosom the germs of destruction. A tribe of Tatars, denominated Seljukians from their leader, had been invited by Mahmood to establish themselves in Khorâsân; but, observing the rapidity of their increase, their military prowess, their redoubtable courage, he repented towards the end of his life the step he had taken, and was about to banish them his dominions when death put a stop to his designs. His fears were quickly realized. In the civil war which ensued between his sons, the Seljukians seized upon Samarkand and Bokhara, and, though repressed for a moment in their ambitious enterprise, they remained independent masters of Samarkand and its territory. Regarding them as subdued and broken, while they were merely checked, Massoud collected together an army and invaded India, but was recalled, after some trifling successes, by the news that the Persian provinces had revolted, and the Seljukians again taken arms in the north. The Persians were soon reduced

to obedience, but the Seljukians, a more warlike people, defeated the generals sent against them with great slaughter. Revolts broke out at the same time in various parts of India, and compelled the presence of the emperor, while his Tatar enemies, pursuing their advantages, descended like a tempest upon Khorâsân. To chastise these audacious rebels he once more deserted his conquests in India; but his efforts were powerless; fortune had quitted his standards; so that, after many fruitless endeavours to retrieve his losses, he determined to retire for a time beyond the Indus. His treasures were placed upon three thousand camels, and, attended by his army and his blind brother Mohammed, he directed his march towards Lahore. On the road, however, the army and the slaves, conceiving that men owe no allegiance to kings in adversity, broke out into rebellion, and, having divided between them the royal treasury, placed Mohammed on the throne. Massoud was imprisoned, and shortly afterwards murdered by his nephew, who, in his turn, was almost immediately put to death, together with his blind father, by Modaud, the son of Massoud, who then ascended the throne.

Discouraged as were the Hindoos by so many disasters and defeats, they nevertheless took advantage of these troubles to attempt the recovery of their independence. Their enterprise, however, entirely failed; but the empire of Ghizni had in the Seljukians enemies far more hardy and dangerous, whose daily encroachments it beheld with indignation, while its ambitious and bloody-minded princes seemed more intent upon cutting off each other than on warding off hostilities from without. Several emperors succeeded each other, who were too closely occupied with internal commotions and contests against the Seljukians to think of pushing their conquests in

India; but in 1079 Ibrahim, a mild, moderate, religious monarch, renewed the Indian wars, in which his arms were more fortunate than they had been against his northern enemies. The empire of Ghizni, however, was already in its decline. Despotism, injustice, cruelty, vices every where too common in kings, at length effected its dissolution, and the Gaurian dynasty succeeded that of Ghizni.

The city of Gaur, or Ghor, which gave rise to the appellative of these princes, is placed by Ibn Haukal in Khorâsân, and vaguely, by Major Rennel, about the 34° of north latitude, south-west of Balkh. By the Gaurian Yeasuddin, and his brother Mohammed, the emperor of Ghizni was driven, about 1171, to take refuge in India, whither he was pursued by the conquerors. At first the nobles of India took up arms in defence of their ancient masters; but their power or their courage being unequal to the task, they in a short time submitted, first in Lahore, where the capital still held out, and afterwards in Multan. In Guzerat the Gaurian arms received a severe check, and the city of Lahore, frequently besieged in vain, only yielded at length to those base acts of treachery, permitted by the morality of conquerors, but visited by the avenging pen of history with eternal infamy. The murder of the Ghaznevide prince, Khosru II. in 1184, closes the history of Ghizni, whose power had long been annihilated.

But it mattered not to the Hindoos whether the empire were possessed by Ghaznevide or Gaurian, since whoever enjoyed the throne appeared to reign only that he might carry slaughter and desolation through Hindoostan. Mohammed, the brother and general of the monarch of Gaur, had no sooner destroyed Khosru, than, assembling his forces, he traversed Multan, and penetrated into Ajmere. Here he was encountered and defeated by the Rajah of

Delhi, who compelled him to retire, with great loss, to Ghizni. But, like the bowl of Circe, the pleasures of conquest, once tasted, madden for life. Neither success nor misfortune could repress the ardour of Mohammed, who, once more collecting his forces, recrossed the Indus, defeated the united armies of one hundred and fifty rajahs, and, having intrusted the government of the newly conquered provinces to Kuttub, a slave, proceeded in his conquests, plundering and devastating the whole of northern India. Kuttub, who was a man endued with genius and courage, besieged and took Delhi, on which account he has been styled by historians "the founder of the Musulman empire in India." Immediately after this he defeated the Jâts, who, dreaming of conquest and plunder, had issued forth from their fastnesses in Guzerat. Next year he crossed the Jumna, took by assault the strong fortress of Khola, and having established at Delhi the seat of his government, prepared to join his benefactor Mohammed in achieving the subjugation of the eastern provinces. By the death of its rajah, whom Kuttub slew with an arrow, he prepared the way for Mohammed's entrance into Benares, where the images of the gods were broken and thrown to the ground. Kuttub now returned westward, where he signalized his courage by so many brilliant exploits both in Rajast'han and Guzerat that Mohammed, on returning to Ghizni, created him viceroy of India, with the power of a real sovereign.

At Ghizni Mohammed now succeeded his brother, who died childless. The remainder of his reign, which has little connexion with the history of India, was consumed entirely in wars, and he was at length assassinated by the Guikawars, a race of savage mountaineers whom he had taken into his service. By his death Kuttub was rendered master of India,

though he still paid a nominal tribute to Mahmood, the nephew and successor of Mohammed, who, shutting himself up in his palace, like another Sardanapalus, contented himself with the enjoyments of his harem, while others tasted the sweets of power. Nasr-eddin, governor of Multan, rendered himself independent; and Eldoze, who had been intrusted with the government of Ghizni, not only followed his example, but, aiming at greater things, marched with a powerful army into the Punjâb, with intent to deprive Kuttub of his dominions. In this attempt, however, he not only failed of his purpose, but was deprived of his kingdom of Ghizni, which fell into the hands of Kuttub. The latter, having been saluted emperor, for a moment yielded to the seductions of pleasure and sloth, which cost him dear; for Eldoze, informed of all his movements, falling suddenly upon Ghizni, defeated his careless rival, who was constrained to take to flight and seek refuge in his Indian possessions. This reverse of fortune awakened him to his true interests. No longer meditating conquests and plunder, he turned his attention to the establishment of order, peace, and justice among his subjects; which, having effected, he perished by a fall from his horse (A. D. 1210), leaving behind him a well-merited reputation for military genius and generosity, so that to express the height of this dazzling virtue it was said, that such a man "was as generous as Kuttub."

Aram, the son of Kuttub, a prince of a feeble character, was very quickly supplanted by Altumsh, son-in-law of Kuttub, descended from a noble Tatar family. This brave soldier had been sold into slavery by his brethren, jealous of the preference shown for him by his father; but his great and excellent qualities raised him by degrees through every grade of military rank, until at length he

reached the highest in the service, and was honoured with the hand of the emperor's daughter. In the mean time the Gaurian dynasty west of the Indus was overthrown by Mohammed, Sultan of Khowarezm; and Eldoze, driven from his kingdom, immediately conceived the project of seizing upon India. Defeated in this insane attempt, he expiated, by a perpetual imprisonment, or by poison, the iniquity of his design! The Sultan of Khowarezm, the destroyer of the Ghaznevide, or rather the Gaurian dynasty, began, from the moment of success, to imagine himself invincible. He had indeed subdued Persia, Khorâsân, Bactriana, Caubul, Ghizni, Gaur, Mawaralnahr, and Lahore, and reigned over a hundred nations. A considerable share of vainglory was therefore natural; but Mohammed was guilty of excess in this kingly quality, and by some insolent act (the murder of ambassadors according to some), drew upon himself the resentment of Genghis Khan, who was at this period ravaging northern Asia with fire and sword. The fate of the Sultan of Khowarezm was quickly decided. Encountering the prodigious army of Genghis on the plains of the Jaxartes, a bloody battle ensued, in which, it is said, upwards of three hundred and fifty thousand men were slain. Genghis, worsted in the battle, remained victorious by the unwise policy of his rival, who retreated from the field, in the hope that the martial ardour of the Mogols might cool by delays. But this Fabian conduct was unsuited to the conjuncture. His own soldiers were daunted by the appearance of flight; those of Genghis in the same proportion encouraged; so that the course he had adopted from policy soon became an act of necessity. Genghis, dividing his vast forces into five parts, under the command of himself and his four sons, penetrated into Khowarezm by five different roads at once, and quickly

rendered himself master of Bokhara, Samarcand, and Khowarezm, whose fall was immediately followed by that of the principal cities of Persia, Turkestan, and Caubul. Mohammed perished obscurely on an insignificant island in the Caspian Sea. He was succeeded by his son Jelâl-eddin, a prince of a brave, ardent, chivalrous character, equal perhaps to Genghis himself in military genius, superior in every moral and amiable quality; but on bad terms with fortune. Notwithstanding several splendid victories over the enemies of his country, the evil destinies of his house prevailed; he was compelled to fly before the Mogols, and, unhappily for Hindoostan, directed his course towards the Indus. On the banks of that river, however, he was overtaken by Genghis with an army which ten times outnumbered his own. But the Khowarezmians were not accustomed to count their foes, least of all Jelâl-eddin. They therefore returned the charge of the Mogols with desperate valour; twenty thousand of their number already lay dead on the field; pressed on one side by the enemy, on the other by a vast river, whose deep and rapid stream appeared impassable, they continued to fight, though hopeless of victory. Genghis issued orders to spare the life of Jelâl-eddin. The prince, divining the truth from the conduct of the Tatars, who shot not their arrows against him, and preferring death to captivity, no sooner saw that no hope of victory remained, than he plunged his horse into the Indus. At this moment Genghis reached the bank of the river, and seeing his chivalrous enemy gallantly struggling with the violence of the current, while he turned round from time to time, and shot a Parthian shaft at his conqueror, the barbarian was smitten with admiration. Several Tatar and Mogol officers, animated by the presence of the Khan, now prepared to pursue him, but Genghis

would not permit them; the daring courage of Jelâl-eddin excited his enthusiasm, and he exclaimed,—"Happy the child who can boast of such a father!" The noble animal on which the Khowarezmian prince was mounted, seconding the ardour of his master, landed him safely on the opposite shore; where being joined by the feeble remnant of his army, which had also swam across the Indus, he once more prepared to meet his enemy. Genghis, however, did not continue the pursuit. Jelâl-eddin, deprived of his kingdom, shorn of his power, without treasures, without even a home, still relied upon the fertility of his genius, and the love which he knew how to command from his troops. India appeared to offer him the chance of a kingdom, for which both he and his followers were ready to shed their blood; but his enemies were too numerous and powerful: compelled to recross the Indus, he recovered by degrees a portion of his own country; but proceeding, in 1231, into Kurdistan, he there perished by the dagger of an infamous assassin.

The Mogols on this occasion, though led in pursuit of Jelâl-eddin to the very bank of the Indus, had been prevented by circumstances from entering India. But the evil was only deferred. However, the sovereign of Delhi, as if menaced with no tempest from without, employed his forces in making conquests in Bengal and Behar, and on the left bank of the Indus. He also recovered Gwalior from the Hindoos, and rendered himself master of Oojein, where, like his predecessor Mahmood, he sullied his victories by intolerance, dilapidating or destroying the physical symbols of a worship which no human force sufficed to eradicate. Altumsh died in 1235, and was succeeded by his son Firoz I. The reign of this prince was short. He was dethroned and assassinated, with the consent, it is supposed, of his sister Rizia, who

succeeded him. Of this princess Altumsh had remarked, on one occasion, that she was the only one of his children who possessed the courage and understanding of a man. Nevertheless, a short and turbulent reign of three years and a half, shaken with rebellion and stained with blood, conducted her to the tomb; while her brother, Beiram II., her assassin, a weak and wicked prince, ascended the throne. It was during his reign that the Mogols, commanded by a general of Oktaï, one of the sons of Genghis Khan, first entered India, and laid siege to Lahore. Beiram was put to death, and Massoud IV., the son of Firoz, placed upon the throne. The Mogols, who had penetrated as far as Bengal, were attacked and put to flight by Massoud, who, immediately after the victory, renounced all active pursuits, and was consequently dethroned, imprisoned, and succeeded by Mahmood, a man who owed every thing to his bounty. Though commencing with ingratitude, Mahmood II., once seated on the throne, exhibited better qualities than such a beginning seemed to promise. He was the protector of the people, the patron of the learned, and the generous friend of the poor.

Mahmood's reign, however, was troubled by many and long wars, in Multan, in the Panjâb, and in the mountains of northern Hindoostan, in all of which his arms were successful. The Rajpoots, aiming at the recovery of their independence, were reduced with prodigious slaughter to obedience; and the Mogols effectually prevented from entering India. About the year 1259 a splendid embassy arrived at the court of Delhi, from Hoolagoo, grandson of Genghis, at that time emperor of Persia. The ambassador, though regarded in the light of a spy, was magnificently received. But Balin, the grand vizir of Mahmood, who suspected the intentions of Hoolagoo,

determined to impress the Mogol with a high idea of the riches and military resources of his master. For this purpose he went out to meet the ambassador, accompanied by fifty thousand horse. Two hundred thousand infantry were drawn up in files along the road, with three thousand artillery chariots, and two thousand war elephants in the intervals. All these troops performed their most skilful evolutions before the Mogol. The court, the most brilliant then existing, consisted of a number of Hindoo and Musulman princes, all the omrahs of the empire, and the most distinguished inhabitants of Delhi; so that the Tatars, unaccustomed to such splendour, could not fail to admire the wealth and power of Mahmood. During the remainder of this monarch's reign the peace of the empire was not disturbed; and when he died, in 1265, he carried with him to the grave the regrets and sincere lamentations of his people, whose interests he had always, to the best of his power, consulted. During the adversity which had clouded his early years, he earned his bread by copying the Koran; and this business he did not lay aside when on the throne. Having one day completed a copy of the Koran, a learned man to whom it was shown pointed out a word which he supposed to be erroneous. The monarch immediately erased it, and substituted the word suggested by the critic. When he had departed Mahmood, who was far better versed in the Koran than he, restored the true reading, but spoiled the look of the page. Upon this his courtiers expressed their astonishment that he should have blotted his Koran to gratify the whim of a scholar; but Mahmood observed,—"I knew that the copy was correct as it at first stood, but preferred making an alteration, rather than afflict the heart of an honest man by proving him to be in error!"

Mahmood was succeeded by his vizir and general, Balin, who began his reign by cutting off all the surviving members of a conspiracy for dividing the empire, in which he himself had formerly been engaged. This act of cruelty once perpetrated, he yielded to his natural impulses, which all tended towards humanity, and the remainder of his reign was adorned by the exercise of generosity, humanity, and compassion. The Mogols still continued to hover on the frontiers of India. To repress their incursions, and damp their ardour, were the principal objects of Balin's warlike undertakings, though the revolt of the Subahdar (governor) of Bengal compelled him to engage in civil broils. The old age of this prince was imbittered by the death of his eldest and favourite son, Mohammed, who fell on the field of victory in a battle with the Mogols. Kera, whom he thenceforward designed as his successor, forfeited, by rebellious movements, his right to the crown, which the aged monarch bestowed on Kai Khosru, the son of Mohammed. A few days after this ceremony Balin died, old and full of days, leaving behind him the reputation of one of the greatest princes of the East. His last will, however, was disobeyed. The intrigues of the court succeeded in excluding Kai Khosru in favour of Kai Kobad, the son of Keru. This prince, devoted to pleasure, incapable of business, caused, by his despicable conduct, the ruin of his family, and the passing of the crown into another house. With his murder, and that of his son, ended the Gaurian dynasty (A. D. 1289), which had possessed the throne of India during the space of one hundred and seventeen years.

Firoz II., who now ascended the throne, was an Afghan, of the Khilligi, or Ghilji tribe. Commencing, like Balin, with acts of cruelty, he afterwards appeared to change his nature, and exhibited, through-

out a long reign, a remarkable degree of mildness and humanity. Nevertheless, rebellions and civil wars broke out continually. The placability of the prince, which increased with his years, seemed to encourage the ambitious, who, though always defeated, ceased not to renew their revolutionary designs. Nevertheless, Firoz was nowise wanting in energy, as was manifest from the manner in which he carried on his foreign wars, displaying, on all occasions, great military capacity, the utmost firmness of purpose, together with a generosity, a modesty in success, a disposition to spare and pardon, which gained for him the respect and admiration even of his enemies. A body of Mogols, whom he defeated on the frontiers of Multan, instead of being pursued and hewn to pieces after the victory, were received into the service of the empire. Hoolagoo, their general, was honoured with the hand of the monarch's daughter; while his followers had lands assigned them in a neighbouring district, where they erected the city of Mogolpoor. Shortly after this event Alâ, the nephew of Firoz, undertook, with a small number of troops, the conquest of the Dekkan, where, though too weak to effect his principal purpose, he succeeded in amassing immense spoil. On his return from this expedition, he proceeded into Bengal with the design of raising troops, and aiming at the empire. Hither Firoz, by whom he was exceedingly beloved, came with a small retinue to visit him; while the confiding old man was indulging his affection, and exhibiting every mark of tenderness for his nephew and son-in-law, he was attacked and murdered by assassins employed for the purpose by the latter.

On the murder of his father-in-law, Alâ ascended the throne. Fêtes, promotions, largesses, dazzled the people of Delhi, and seemed, at least, to cast the virtues and genius of Firoz into oblivion. A

hundred thousand Mogols, who had penetrated into Lahore, were defeated with vast slaughter by the emperor's brother; Guzerat was in great part subdued, and the wife of its rajah taken captive, together with his favourite slave, Khoja Kafoor, who afterwards acquired a fatal celebrity. But, having once tasted of the delights of India, the Mogols, though often defeated, perpetually renewed their invasions, and more than once appeared on the point of annihilating the empire. Still, however, the arms of Alâ prevailed. Success elated his heart. Nothing could now satisfy his ambition, short of giving his people a new religion, and making the conquest of the world; imitating at once Mohammed and Alexander, whose name he assumed; striking money with the appellation of Sicandar II. But religions are not founded, or the world subdued, by such persons as Alâ, who possessed neither the enthusiastic genius of Mohammed, nor the vast comprehension, the untiring perseverance, the attractive splendour, or the enlightened ambition of the Macedonian king, who, in spite of his royalty, had imbibed much of the republican energy of Greece. Accordingly, Alâ was easily diverted from his religious project; but, understanding nothing of the art of governing, except the cutting off of heads, it was necessary to his happiness that he should be somewhere employed in shedding blood. In order to gratify this propensity, he now undertook, as a sovereign, the conquest of the Dekkan.

However, it was necessary to commence nearer home. The Rajpoots, strong in their fastnesses, stronger in their native courage, had never been subdued. Against these Alâ directed his first movements; but found the reduction of a small number of towns and fortresses in the hilly districts of Rajast'han a work of so much difficulty that he must quickly have been convinced that, if every country should be

defended with equal courage, the conquest of the world would require a long life. Irritated at their brave resistance, he put to death without mercy the soldiers who fell into his hands, thus furnishing such as still held out the strongest possible motive for dying sword in hand. The most sanguinary of his enterprises was the sack of Cheetore, the ancient capital of Mewâr, in which perished the flower of Rajpoot chivalry. The conquest of the Dekkan was intrusted to the slave Kafoor, who, at the head of a hundred thousand horse, and a vast army of infantry, marched towards the south. Here this ferocious miscreant, knowing the passion of his master for plunder, put in practice every art and every crime in order to amass riches, which he conveyed to Delhi, thus causing the heart of Alâ to dilate with joy. Meanwhile the sovereign yielded himself up to the enjoyments of the harem. Kafoor disposed of places and honours. Discontents were multiplied. Rebellions broke out. Conquests, effected in haste, and badly governed, were rendered of no avail by civil wars. News of all these things, like the tale of Job's disasters, came crowding at once upon Alâ, and threw him into a paroxysm of rage which caused his death (A. D. 1316.)

He was succeeded by his son Omar, a child of seven years old, who by a false will, invented by Kafoor, was preferred to his elder brothers. Kafoor obtained the regency. This state of injustice and tyranny lasted but thirty-five days, at the end of which Kafoor was murdered, and succeeded by Mubârik, the third son of Alâ. But though the actors were changed, the tragedy proceeded. Mubârik, who seemed at first to desire nothing beyond the regency, quickly threw off the mask, put out his little brother's eyes, and ascended the throne. His reign was bloody and brief. Khosru, the general of his

armies, formed against him a conspiracy in which he was slain. Khosru then ascended the throne. His execrable tyranny excited general indignation, and Toglik Ghâzi, a Pat'han, taking advantage of the popular feeling, erected the standard of revolt, and marched against Khosru, who, being defeated and deserted by his army, took refuge in a tomb, from whence he was immediately dragged forth to punishment. Toglik Ghâzi received as a reward the empire which he had delivered from a despot, and showed himself worthy of the high trust reposed in him by the virtues with which he adorned the throne. He was the patron of knowledge and learned men, labouring to diffuse among his subjects the advantages of education. But his days were cut short by the atrocity of his son, who, under pretence of receiving him with honour, erected a species of pavilion with a throne in the centre, so contrived that, as soon as the seat should be pressed, the whole edifice would fall to pieces. Toglik Ghâzi having perished by the fall of this pavilion, his son Jonah succeeded him (A.D. 1324) under the name of Mohammed the Third. His reign, begun with parricide, was one continued series of cruelty and bloodshed. The Mogols, having invaded Hindoostan, were bribed to depart. Dishonour was thus added to tyranny; yet, during a space of twenty-seven years, filled with crimes which inspired general hatred, no hand was found to deliver India from its oppressor, and the tyrant died in his bed.

This monster was succeeded by his cousin Firoz III. The historian, sickened with the relation of villany, enters with secret delight on the reign of a virtuous prince, as if he participated in the honest glory arising from a series of endeavours to secure the happiness of mankind. Firoz began his reign with prudence. The Mogols who had been hired by his predecessor he disarmed, knowing that mercena-

ries are invariably the tools of every desperate aspirant who aims at sovereignty by wickedness. His next endeavours were to regulate the interior administration of the empire, to put the finances in order, and to secure to his subjects impartial justice. The taxes were diminished, and the injuries of the poor redressed with paternal humanity. From these glorious toils he was snatched away by an irruption of the Mogols, who poured down in vast numbers from the mountains of the north. The barbarians retired before the imperial forces, leaving the country which they had overrun a desolate waste. Other enemies were defeated or terrified; and the virtuous monarch returned with delight to the exercise of his favourite arts of peace. In this career he arrived at extreme old age, and saw those cares and infirmities, which are the forerunners of death, present themselves before his throne, and beckon him to descend. He obeyed the summons, and abdicated in favour of his son Mohammed IV., in 1387. His choice was unhappy. Mohammed, a slave to pleasure, and destitute of genius, soon found himself surrounded by more enemies than he could contend with, and was compelled to fly. The aged monarch, whose will was still respected, next appointed his grandson, Toglik II., to succeed him, and then died at the age of ninety. He had not distinguished himself greatly as a general, but loving peace, and cultivating with ardour whatever could embellish and render it valuable, his memory, like that of Numa, has been connected with a different kind of glory: canals, sluices, palaces, roads, mosques, schools, hospitals, caravansaries, bridges, baths, fountains, gardens; such were the works which he preferred to the labours of war.

Toglik II., no wiser than his uncle, speedily rendered himself detested and despicable. He was

assassinated at the end of five months, and succeeded by his cousin Abubekr. Mohammed, son of Firoz, still lived, and though in exile and poverty, wandering almost deserted among the mountains, he had not renounced all hope of reigning over Hindoostan. He was a prince of considerable perseverance, and the firmness which he wanted on the throne, adversity seems to have bestowed upon him. Supported by his son Humaioon, he maintained during many years a desperate struggle for the empire, still, though defeated, renewing his attempts, repairing the greatest losses with rapidity, and never under any circumstances yielding to despair. Fortune, at length, weary of persecuting, changed sides, and Mohammed, after several times gaining and losing possession of Delhi, finally entered it as emperor. His whole reign, which lasted six years and a half, was passed in toil and danger; but he died in his bed. Humaioon succeeded him; but died in forty-five days. Mahmood, another son of Mohammed, was then proclaimed; but being quite a child, he enjoyed only the name of power, while his vizirs and generals fought in his name for their own interests, and through jealousy of each other deluged the country with blood.

Such was the state of things in India, and such the sovereign, when Timoor, having subjugated Persia, appeared with his ferocious soldiers on the right bank of the Indus. The news of his approach was carried to Delhi by crowds of people whom the very terror of his name, or the mere flashing of his weapons had put to flight. It would be unjust to deny to this celebrated bandit the possession of distinguished genius. Courage, in such individuals, is not a virtue; it is merely the instinct of slaughter; his sole distinction, therefore, rests on his claim to intellectual power, which, whatever may be pretended to the contrary,

he undoubtedly possessed. Few conquerors have any other claim to admiration than this quality; but Timoor was *the conqueror* by preference; no consideration of humanity, no misgivings of conscience, no paltry affectation of intending the public good, seem ever to have interfered with his views. The sword was the only title he pleaded. Laws, rights, institutions, he despised. He set himself up as the master of mankind, tyrannized over those who acknowledged him, killed those who would not, delighted in dashing the sceptres of petty despots to the dust, in trampling on their thrones, in levelling their palaces, in annihilating their pride. The blood of man he spilt with the same coolness as he would have spilt water. Universal empire was his aim, and regarding all considerations of justice or injustice, of virtue or vice, of good or evil, as the mental playthings of simple dotards, he proceeded towards his object with reckless indifference, through seas of blood and guilt, the mere aspect of which would have cooled the ardour of any less ferocious and obdurate mind. He appeared on the banks of the Indus in the year 1398, and in ten months had subdued every thing that presented itself in the shape of an enemy in all Hindoostan. Numerous cities, which offered resistance to his power, were taken, pillaged, and delivered up to the flames; while the inhabitants, without distinction of age or sex, were cut off by the sword. Delhi itself experienced this fate. The emperor, however, escaped into Guzerat, until the tempest had blown over, and all its thunders and lurid clouds disappeared behind the mountains of the north.

Timoor, having after his fashion subdued India, marched his invincible legions through the defiles of the Himâlaya, emerged into Tartary, and took the road to Samarcand, leaving behind him the reputation of a great general, infamously bloody-minded,

and worthy of the deep execration of all succeeding ages. His departure from Hindoostan was succeeded by unusual anarchy and bloodshed. A thousand petty tyrants immediately issued forth from obscurity, all actuated by ungovernable ambition, all desirous of imitating, to the utmost of their pigmy powers, the atrocious example which he had set them. Nothing was heard on all sides but the voices of impotent princes, vociferously clamouring their pretensions to the empire. The monarchical spirit, unsurrounded by those splendid delusions which dazzle the multitude, here exhibited itself naked, exciting the terror of mankind, but inspiring no salutary lasting hatred. Through a crowd of competitors Mahmood made his way to Delhi. His rights, as they were called, were acknowledged, but his power was small, his prerogatives usurped by his vizir. The contemptible monarch, shut up, like a hog, within the walls of his harem, did nothing but sleep and eat. At length, after many misfortunes, and abundant contempt and dishonour, Mahmood died, having reigned about twenty years. He was, says Ferishta, a man unsuited to the times in which he lived, and unworthy of living in better.

Mahmood was succeeded by Daulat Lodi, of Pathan origin; but his feeble character exposed him to a rapid fall; besieged and taken prisoner by Khizer, a descendant of the Prophet, he shortly afterwards perished in captivity. His successor assumed not the name of emperor. Pretending to be merely the governor of Hindoostan, in the name of Shahrok, son of Timoor, whose name he caused to be recited in the public prayers, he sent annually to Samarcand rich presents in the guise of tribute. The intention of this policy was to restrain the ambition of the turbulent omrahs by the fear of a second Mogol invasion. And it was not without success; for though

several chieftains broke out into rebellion, the majority, remembering the arms of Timoor, affected loyalty, and devoured their chagrin in secret. Khizer, taking advantage of every interval of tranquillity which was left him by the aristocratical discontent of the nobles, applied himself with diligence to the exercise of his royal duties, labouring anxiously to heal the wounds which war had inflicted on the country. In the midst of his beneficent works, however, when the people had begun to taste of the happy fruits of good government, he was overtaken by death, having reigned only seven years and a half. He was succeeded by his eldest son Mubârik II., who, after a turbulent reign of thirteen years, was assassinated by his vizir.

Mohammed V., the grandson of Khizer, was now proclaimed, under whom the sanguinary vizir was at first omnipotent. Whom he would he punished, banished, imprisoned; and whom he would he honoured. The possession of so much power, when unjustly used, could not fail to kindle resentment, which, after burning secretly for some time, at length flamed forth into rebellion. This, the vizir had the art to persuade the emperor, was directed, not against him, but against the throne itself; so that the feeble prince, conceiving his interests to be identical with those of his minister, shut himself up with him in Delhi, which during three months was besieged by the malcontents. Convinced at length of the iniquity of his minister, or fearing to participate in his punishment, he now formed the design of sacrificing him to popular indignation; while the vizir, on his part, getting a glimpse of his secret intentions, determined to prevent their fulfilment by the assassination of their framer. Both emperor and minister, therefore, resolved on murdering each other, now formed a band of assassins. The vizir made the first move-

ment; but the emperor's murderers were the more powerful; the vizir fell, and his body, by order of his master, was mangled, mutilated, and torn in pieces. The gates of Delhi were then thrown open to the insurgents, who, discovering the fate of their enemy, acknowledged the authority of Mohammed, but were careful to secure to themselves every place of trust and profit. The remainder of this prince's reign was a series of rebellions, civil wars, and executions. He himself, however, escaped the hand of the executioner, dying, in 1446, of disease, leaving the possession of the crown to his eldest son Alâ II. This wretched young man, more inconsistent, more perverse, more feeble than his father, began his reign with an undertaking which terminated by overwhelming him with contempt. Taking umbrage, as was just and natural, at the too great power and overweening ambition of Beloli, governor of Lahore, he resolved to humble and degrade him, and for this purpose set out at the head of his army from the capital. Suddenly, however, he became convinced that Beloli was an overmatch for his forces, which were then commanded to proceed in another direction. This resolution had scarcely been formed, when a rumour was spread through the camp that the sovereign of Canouj was marching upon Delhi; upon which, renouncing his plans of conquest or revenge, he flew back, without inquiry or reflection, to defend the capital. Here, on his arrival, he found every thing as he had left it. No enemy had been heard of. But the people, observing the absurdity of his conduct, eagerly gave credit to the report that their emperor was insane. Alà, on the other hand, finding himself despised by the inhabitants of Delhi, conceived and announced his design of removing elsewhere the seat of empire; he was dissuaded from the execution of the scheme by his vizir; but his intention having been

published, he incurred all the hatred which it was calculated to engender, without enjoying the satisfaction of revenging himself on his contemnors. Beloli, who perfectly understood the disposition of the emperor towards him, now appeared in arms before the capital. Alâ was stricken with terror, but, being persuaded by ill advisers, that it was against the vizir alone that all this show of hostility was directed, he commanded his faithful minister to be cast into prison, and hastened to his country palace. His enemies were not satisfied with this step. They represented to him that, in order to secure his power, it was necessary that the vizir should be sacrificed. Even to this he basely consented. But the vizir, informed of the design against his life, escaped from prison, and by the exertion of his influence threw open the gates of Delhi to Beloli. The conqueror, more humane than could have been anticipated, still affected obedience to Alâ; but the latter, for once in his life acting prudently, utterly renounced all claim to the throne, merely stipulating for the possession of Boodwan, as a fief dependent on the empire. With this request Beloli gladly complied; and in this obscurity the ex-emperor spent the remainder of his life in the enjoyment of those grovelling pleasures in which he delighted. He survived his abdication thirty years.

The history of Beloli resembles that of almost every able prince who preceded him. In every neighbour, in every great feudatory of the empire, he had a competitor and an enemy. Every man's eye seemed to be raised to the throne, and to behold with impatient envy him who sat thereon. To preserve his power, therefore, he was constantly engaged in war with his own subjects; and although ultimately he succeeded in triumphing over all his enemies, it was not until he had become a man of blood, prompt,

to punish, reckless of human life, prone to suspicion, ungrateful, severe. From these necessary wars, which strengthened the martial spirit that predominated in his character, he proceeded to others less justifiable; but, satiated at length with conquest and renown, he retired to his capital, where, employing himself in the arts of peace, he passed several years in complete tranquillity.

Before his death, consulting his feelings rather than the interests of the state, Beloli divided the empire between his two eldest sons, Barbek and Nizam, who assumed the name of Sicandar. The latter, upon his accession, had first to maintain a contest with his brother Allum, whom he subdued, and, contrary to oriental policy, pardoned, and intrusted with an important government. The same fortune attended him in his struggle with Barbek, and he pursued the same policy. His brothers being thus humanely disposed of, Sicandar pursued his successes, and in a brief space added Behar and several other provinces to his empire.

In the mean time the Portuguese, having discovered the route to India by the Cape of Good Hope, had landed in Malabar, where they quietly laid the foundations of a vast empire. Once established, however, they quickly found or created occasions of dissension with the natives. The Zamorin Rajah, who had received and protected them, on their first arrival, from the jealousy of the Musulmans, soon became the object of their attacks, and was compelled to seek his safety in flight. The Portuguese, on the other hand, entered into an alliance with the Cochin Rajah, the enemy of the Zamorin. Several battles were fought by sea and land, and the advantage was on the side of the Zamorin when Francis and Alphonso Albuquerque arrived in Malabar. The genius of these celebrated men quickly turned the scale of war; the

Zamorin was defeated; the Cochin Rajah reinstated in his dominions; several refractory vassals reduced to obedience. In the midst of this tide of success the Portuguese obtained permission to erect a fort in the city of Cochin, which commanded the castle, the city, and the palace. Thus intrenched they exhibited no disposition to forego the advantages of their position. Every pretext, whether just or unjust, was eagerly seized upon for quarrelling with the natives, in most of which they still gained ground, increasing in insolence and injustice as the chances of impunity augmented. Proceeding in this iniquitous career they at length usurped the exclusive dominion of India, which they preserved during a whole century, pushing their conquests along the coasts, seizing upon the islands, and adding even the cities of the interior to their empire.

Sicandar still reigned at Delhi. In the long interval of repose which succeeded his wars, during which he enjoyed that happiness which is the fruit of moderation and humanity, he manifested a desire to purchase the solid glory which mankind bestow on good government. He compelled his inferior representatives to administer justice with impartiality, punishing severely every attempt at malversation, and rewarding integrity with distinction and riches. He removed the seat of government from Delhi to Agra, and died in 1516, after a reign of twenty-nine years.

Sicandar was succeeded by his son Ibrahim II., whose character may be conjectured from a saying which he is reported to have used, that a king should have neither friends nor relations, needing only slaves. His conduct corresponded with this maxim. Accordingly his brother Jelâl-eddin, fearing the effects of so odious an opinion, had recourse to arms, but was defeated without difficulty, and, flying from city to city, drew on his protectors, one after another, the ven

geance of the emperor. Taken captive at length, he was murdered on the road by order of his brother. In all similar circumstances, Ibrahim acted with the same ferocity, pursuing his enemies to destruction, delighting in revenge, and never pardoning an offender. And this he mistook for imperial magnanimity, and the wisest policy of a king. The result by no means answered his expectations. Many powerful nobles, driven to despair by the suspicious and cruel temper of the emperor, to whom a clouded countenance was cause sufficient for severity, raised in their own defence the standard of rebellion; so that at length the despot, looking round him from the solitude of his throne, might have counted almost as many enemies as there were noble and honest minds in his dominions. At this critical period, Baber, a descendant of Timoor, having been expelled from his paternal kingdom, and compelled to take refuge in Caubul, presented himself with an army of Mogols on the banks of the Indus. To the injured, and those who anticipated injuries, the appearance of the Tatar prince seemed to be that of a saviour. They accordingly seized with avidity the opportunity which his coming afforded of being revenged on the gloomy tyrant; who, wrapped in the imaginary dignity of his maxims, knew not that his subjects awaited with impatience the moment when he should bite the dust. Even his brother Alâ, who had hitherto escaped the assassin's dagger, passed over into the ranks of Baber, who immediately intrusted him with the command of an army. However, before the Mogol prince could devote his whole attention to the conquest of India, he was several times recalled to Caubul by invading enemies, who seized on the moment of his absence to invade his dominions. Defeats and losses at length taught them moderation or in-

spired them with terror, and Baber, permitted to pursue unmolested his grand design, advanced at the head of a small but intrepid army towards Delhi. Ibrahim, who did not number cowardice among his vices, came forth with a numerous army to meet him. They encountered each other on the plains of Paniput. On the side of the Sultan were valour, discipline, hope, genius; on that of the Emperor courage and despair. Victory was long doubtful. At length Ibrahim, putting himself at the head of his cavalry, charged the Mogols with desperate valour, the sole virtue which seems to have illuminated his atrocious soul; and in this charge he perished, fighting with a degree of bravery which would have done honour to a better man. The rout of the Afghans then became general, the carnage tremendous. Fifty thousand of their bravest troops, according to some historians, remained upon the field. From Paniput Baber proceeded to ascend the throne of Delhi. This important event in the history of India took place in the year 1525.

In the imperial palace of Agra Baber found the mother of Ibrahim, whose grief he endeavoured by every effort of kindness to alleviate. The treasures of the empire he distributed among his faithful followers, and that with so profuse a generosity, that even his friends blamed the excess of his bounty, calling him the Calender, from a sect of ascetic dervishes who never think of the morrow. The number of Mogols who accompanied Baber was small. Indignant at having been vanquished by such a handful of men, the Pat'hans, who now began to count their conquerors, again took up arms, so that wherever the Mogols turned their eyes they were dazzled by the flash of weapons. For a moment the victors lost courage, and advised a rapid reteat into Caubul; the intrepid Baber replied, "Do you counsel me to

abandon through fear a kingdom which I have conquered at the hazard of my life? It is my destiny to reign or to perish in India, and let my fate be accomplished! However, if there be any among you, who, preferring their personal safety to glory and a life of honour, desire to return into Caubul, let them depart in peace, they have my permission; I would have about me none but those who esteem honour and glory before every thing!" Their natural enthusiasm was instantly rekindled by these words; all thought of retreat was banished; they saw that safety as well as honour lay in their swords alone, and expressed their determination to triumph or perish with their gallant Sultan.

The valour and fortune of Baber at length triumphed over every obstacle—over plots hatched in the palace no less than over the dangers of the field; so that in a brief space of time he saw himself undisputed master of Hindoostan. The empire which his courage and great military genius had gained him he now governed with wisdom, justice, humanity. His mind had been elevated by philosophy, polished by literature, and softened and purified by religion and adversity. Regarding with magnanimous contempt those despicable maxims which teach that mankind were created to be the slaves of kings, Baber rather looked upon himself as a father intrusted with the guidance of a vast family, whose happiness he was bound, under a terrible responsibility, to prefer before his own. He was, in fact, a truly great and extraordinary man, uniting in himself the almost incompatible characters of a conqueror and a good prince. Himself an author, he respected literature and honoured its professors. But his enjoyments were of short duration. No sooner had his virtues and his wisdom taught the people of Hindoostan the extreme happiness of being governed by a great and beneficent

sovereign, than death snatched him away from their eyes (1530), leaving them the sad presentiment of the return of a political chaos. His son Humaioon, however, to whom he bequeathed the throne, was no way unworthy to succeed to such a father. Humane, enlightened, vigilant, brave, and just, he deserved a throne; but, whatever his deserts, he was destined to experience the bitterness of adversity, and worse than all, the ingratitude of men who owed every thing to his generosity, or to that of his father, and in his own brothers that fearful want of natural affection which execrable ambition engenders. No sooner had he appeared on the throne than a crowd of enemies started up on all sides: Shîr Khân in the east, in the south Bahadur, sultan of Guzerat, in the heart of the empire his own brothers Hindal and Câmrân. Leaving the latter to the operation of time and conscience, and having, in one glorious campaign, subdued Bahadur, Humaioon marched against Shîr Khân, governor of Bengal. When the armies came within sight of each other, the rainy season had already commenced; the enemy appeared willing to terminate the quarrel amicably; a treaty was therefore concluded, according to the provisions of which Shîr Khân was to retain possession of Bengal as an imperial vassal. Thus satisfied, Humaioon no longer conceived it necessary to be on his guard against Shîr Khân, and permitted the two armies to mingle together as friends. This was precisely what the wily and profligate Afghan had foreseen and desired. In the dead of the night he made a sudden attack on the emperor's camp, where the soldiers, buried in sleep and wine, were slaughtered like cattle; the emperor himself escaped with the utmost difficulty, and took the road towards Agra. At the news of this terrible disaster his brothers experienced a momentary repentance for the evils of which they were

partly the cause, and throwing themselves on Humaioon's clemency, which was proof against every thing, were again received into favour, not only without suspicion or reproaches, which would have been ill-timed and useless, but with brotherly affection and confidence.

But vice and treachery are companions that vilify the soul which harbours them. Câmrân, irritated at once by ambition and the consciousness of guilt, once more deserted his brother, at the very time when Shîr Khân was preparing to attack him in his capital. Humaioon, however, prepared to meet his enemy. But treachery had not yet done its worst: at the moment of battle, perhaps of victory, his principal general went over, with all his troops, to the enemy, taking fortune along with him. Humaioon was compelled to fly. He directed his course towards Agra, accompanied by a few horsemen; Shîr Khân arrived with his army nearly at the same time. There was no making resistance. Humaioon therefore took the road to Lahore; but found Shîr Khân before him. He then descended the Indus towards Bhiker and Tatta, but found no one to receive him; Câmrân had already fled into Caubul; Hindal now deserted, and took the road to Candahar; baseness and villany seemed to have infected every heart; a conspiracy was entered into to deliver him up to Shîr Khân, upon discovering which he determined to throw himself upon the faith of a Hindoo Rajah, and directed his steps towards Amarcote. In crossing the desert, his followers, tortured with thirst, arrived at a well; they flew towards it; the bucket was drawn up; snatched at by twenty hands at once, it broke from the rope, and fell down into the well. Thus thrown into despair, some threw themselves after it and perished, others dropped dead on the brink. The very camels died of thirst. However, after enduring a thousand

hardships and pangs, Humaioon, with his family and faithful servants, arrived at Amarcote, where they were hospitably received and entertained by the Rajah.

In this city his son Acbar was born, in 1542. Finding that nothing could be immediately effected in India, Humaioon retired with his family into Persia, where he was nobly welcomed by Shah Thamasp, who sympathized with him in his misfortunes, and sought by every mark of kindness and friendship to cause him to forget, if forgetfulness were possible, the condition from which he had fallen.

Meanwhile Shîr Khân, who had now ascended the throne of India, sought by the most vigorous means to enlarge and consolidate his power. He traversed the empire in every direction, reducing the great feudatories, and strengthening his authority by dividing and diminishing that of every other person. His principal care was bestowed on the finances and the army. As soon as both were in a flourishing condition he marched into Rajast'han, defeated an army of Rajpoots on the plains of Merwar, and then hastened to lay siege to Callinger, where he was killed in the moment of success. Cunning, perfidious, cruel, but enterprising and brave, he hesitated at no means that could advance his purposes. He left behind him two sons, Adil and Jelâl-eddin. The latter, being present at his father's death, assumed the sceptre, which his elder brother at first resigned, but afterwards endeavoured to recover. Civil war ensued, and Jelâl-eddin, who had now assumed the name of Selim, overcoming his brother, the latter fled towards the mountains, and was never heard of more. His flight, however, by no means put an end to the troubles of the empire; for the powerful chiefs who had joined his standard, dreading the vindictive temper of royalty, continued in arms, sometimes van-

quished, sometimes victorious, but still trusting to fortune, and hoping for the aid of chance. But, on retiring into Cashmere, where they expected to find succour, they were attacked and cut to pieces, and their heads sent as a present to Selim.

In the meanwhile, Humaioon, who had recovered from his brother Câmrân the provinces beyond the Indus, collected together what forces he could raise, traversed the river, and advanced towards Cashmere. Observing, however, among his omrahs a disinclination to his cause, he ventured not to engage with Selim, who had come forth to encounter him, but contenting himself for the present with erecting a fort on the Indus, which would favour his future passage, and leaving a strong garrison therein, he returned into Caubul. Selim fixed his residence at Gwalior. Here, after narrowly escaping assassination, he died of disease, in the ninth year of his reign. His son Firoz IV., a boy twelve years old, succeeded him. He reigned only three days. Torn from the arms of his mother by his inhuman uncle, his head was cut off in her presence, after which the murderer ascended the throne, under the name of Mohammed *Adil*, or "the Just." The appellation was quickly changed by the people into *Adili*, or "the Fool." The assassin soon found the cares of government, which had appeared so captivating from a distance, far beyond the grasp of his feeble mind; the pleasures of debauchery were the only things for which he had any capacity; ambitious of seeming generous, but incapable of exercising any virtue, his bounty degenerated into ridiculous profusion; the business of the empire devolved upon his vizir, a Hindoo, selected for his gigantic stature, physical strength, and courage, as if political science were necessarily connected with thewes and sinews. His history and end may easily be divined. The effe-

minacy of the emperor having excited the daring ambition of two rivals, Ibrahim III. and Sicandar Shah, he was driven from the capital and central provinces, and compelled to take refuge in the districts near the eastern frontier. India had now, therefore, two or three sovereigns at a time; which Humaioon observing, immediately crossed the Indus, and advanced with his forces, and his son Acbar, then only thirteen years old, in the hope of recovering the throne. His persevering courage was at length rewarded with success. After a short but sanguinary war, in which his youthful son greatly distinguished himself by his courage and talents, he once more saw himself in the possession of the empire, though there still existed two rivals determined to maintain to the last their falling cause. Before they were subdued, a fall down the marble staircase of his palace terminated the reign and life of Humaioon (A.D. 1555).

Acbar, when he succeeded his father, had not yet completed his fourteenth year; even in the East, therefore, he was regarded, notwithstanding the dawning talents and virtues which his character disclosed, as too much a boy to be intrusted with the reins of government; and accordingly Beiram, the friend and adviser of his father, was appointed regent during the minority. This man possessed great talents, together with that turn to severity which was wanting in Humaioon. His first care was to deliver the youthful emperor from the rivalry of Sicandar and Mohammed, a task of prodigious difficulty, and which more than once appeared on the point of terminating unsuccessfully; but fortune favouring his enterprises, he finally succeeded, and thus placed Acbar on the most splendid throne of the East. But Beiram respected no man's life whose existence gave him umbrage. First one head fell, then another: he imagined himself to have discovered the impolicy

of Humaioon's clemency, which he on one occasion haughtily informed Acbar had nearly been the ruin of his house, and seemed fully resolved that the same weakness should not be imputed to him. Accordingly, admitting his talents, his courage, his great aptitude for business, history speaks of him with coolness, as of a man whose head had little trouble in governing his heart, who felt for others no sympathy, and excited none. His prosperity was irksome, even to those who profited by it; and few or none regretted his fall, which was occasioned by an ill-judged application of his despotic maxims to the youthful emperor himself, whom, if he did wish to dethrone and supplant, he at least attempted to govern in the same arbitary style as his subjects.

Nevertheless, there may have been some little ingratitude in the conduct of Acbar, whose impatience to reign may have led him to misinterpret the actions of Beiram, to whom, whatever may have been his errors, he seems, under Providence, to have owed both his throne and his life. His subsequent deeds caused this stain to be forgiven, perhaps forgotten; and it was concluded that so sage a monarch could not, in shaking off the tutelage of a minister, have been guilty of precipitance or injustice. But the same passion for power prevailed, we suspect, in both. The minister endeavoured to prolong his influence, the prince to acquire premature power; and because the latter, when he acquired did not misuse it, the former has been accused of projects which, perhaps, he never formed, and which he would have been pardoned for forming had Acbar proved in the event a tyrant or a fool.

The retirement of Beiram seemed to be the signal of revolt to all the disaffected. The spirit of conquest, from which no prince possessed of military talents appears to be free, likewise augmented the ranks of

the hostile; for Acbar, far from conceiving that the well-governing of his paternal kingdom could afford him sufficient employment for his wisdom and activity, immediately formed the design of adding the Dekkan and various other countries to his dominions. Nothing could more strongly recommend him to the favour of the Mogols. Brave, hardy, enthusiastic, but ignorant of the arts of peace, this people experienced inexpressible delight at the prospect of war, which, besides furnishing that violent excitement in which men of feeble or uncultivated imaginations find their happiness, always promised and generally afforded the needy and the adventurous opportunities of enriching themselves. Covetousness of wealth, however, was the ruin of several of Acbar's generals. Having subdued the enemy, they, as if fighting for themselves, blindly seized upon the treasures which fell into their hands, though the sudden apparition of Acbar, when they least expected him, in their camp, exposed them to the shame of detection, to suspicion for life, as well as to the ungracious yielding up of that which they might at first have rendered with glory. To avoid this, some deserted with their ill-gotten gain to the enemy, or swelled the ranks of rebellion; thus ensuring themselves infamy, if not punishment. However, in spite of these disasters, the genius of Acbar prevailed. He inherited much of the humanity and clemency of his father; but this, like the beautiful bloom and freshness of youth, after diffusing a halo of glory over his early years, appeared to be gradually diminished by great commerce with the world; the strongest proof that can be adduced against the claims of this monarch to genuine greatness; for the distinguishing features of souls of firm texture can never be worn away by collision, however close or constant, with other minds. Still, Acbar was a magnificent prince.

Having, after a long and obstinate civil war, reduced his rebellious nobles to subjection, the first undertaking of Acbar was the siege of Cheetore. This he pushed with the utmost vigour; but the valour of the Rajpoots, which, well directed, might have sufficed to drive the stranger from the land, opposed so signal an obstacle to his success, that, but for an equivocal circumstance, which may be either praised or blamed, it seems probable that he would have been ultimately defeated. Observing Jeimul, the prudent and chivalrous commander of Cheetore, giving certain orders on the rampart, he called for a musket, took aim, and shot him dead on the spot. An action like this, which we may, perhaps, applaud in a man like Benvenuto Cellini, who performed a similar achievement at the siege of Rome by the French, appears mean, pitiful, too much like the triumph of an assassin, in a great emperor, who, sanctioned by prejudice in employing the hands of others in slaughter, is still expected to preserve his own free from blood, at least on such occasions as this. However, on the death of their chief the Rajpoots lost all hope. During the ensuing night the tremendous sacrifice of the *johur* was performed in the city, and while they were achieving this work of despair, the Mogols entered, and completed what their own despair had begun. Those who survived were sold into slavery; a barbarous action, which history must record to the eternal dishonour of Acbar. The reduction of several other Rajpoot cities followed, and the terror which his arms inspired soon purchased him leisure for enlarging and beautifying the city of Agra, which he surrounded with ramparts of hewn stone, and adorned with magnificent palaces. This done, he flew to undertake new conquests, and successively reduced Guzerat, Bengal, Cashmere, and the greater part of the Dekkan. The days of Acbar

were not doomed, however, to pass without bitterness: in the midst of his triumphs his eldest son, Selim, impatient for the throne, revolted, plundered the capital, and prepared for open war; Abul Fazl, his wise and faithful minister, was murdered by banditti; his second son, exhausted at the age of thirty by debauchery, died a lingering death. He was about to march in person against Selim, when the news of the death of Daniel arrived. Afflicted, heart-stricken, disconsolate, he wrote as follows to his only child: "Ungrateful son! dost thou envy thy father the few days which Heaven may yet have in store for him? Come, he will not defend himself against *thee;* hasten, and pierce his bosom." Selim, moved by these touching words, fled without escort or followers to Delhi, and throwing himself at the feet of his father, implored his forgiveness. To this Acbar replied only by pressing him in his arms, and by tears, wrung by his son's repentance from his heart. Empires and kingdoms were forgotten—they were a father and a son reconciled; and the emotions of nature impetuously mastered all other feelings. But the delicate frame of the aged monarch, worn down by fatigue and sorrow, was incapable of enduring a mental agitation so violent; he was suddenly seized with a malady, which in a few days carried him to the grave, in the fiftieth year of his reign and sixty-third of his age. Acbar was undoubtedly one of the greatest princes of the East. Affable, generous, brave, and, in general, humane and just, he united with these fine qualities a vast capacity for business, distinguished military genius, and literary and philosophical acquirements of no common order. It must not, however, be dissembled that he sometimes delivered himself up, it matters not whether from the fury of passion or from policy, to fierce acts of cruelty, which stain his character, and

lower him considerably in our estimation. That these actions were redeemed by others of a different stamp there can be no doubt; but it is the duty of the historian to describe men as he finds them, neither exaggerating their good deeds nor extenuating their bad. Acbar died in 1605. During the reign of this prince, the Portuguese empire in India declined rapidly, and the Dutch, English, and French began to make trading settlements on the coasts.

Selim, the son of Acbar, assumed, on ascending the throne, the pompous name of *Jehânghîr*, or "conqueror of the world." This prince was half a Hindoo, his mother being a Rajpoot princess of illustrious line; in consequence, perhaps, of which he was the first Mohammedan sovereign who manifested a thoroughly kindly disposition towards the native population, who up to that period had been regarded merely as objects on which the true believers might legitimately vent their restless valour. Every eastern prince seems destined to have rebellions to quell, and relations to slaughter or pardon. In the case of Jehânghîr, it was his eldest son, Khosru, who was the first and most persevering rebel; but, after many vicissitudes, the youthful prince was taken and put in prison, where he was some years afterwards murdered by one of his brothers. The emperor, meanwhile, indulging in the vices and yielding to the impulses of tyranny, had conceived a criminal passion for Nurmahal, the beautiful wife of Shîr Afkun, a Turkoman chief of distinguished merit and bravery. Informed of the emperor's designs upon his wife, the Turkoman retired into Bengal, where he shut himself up with Nurmahal in a castle of great strength. Hither, however, the satellites of Jehânghîr pursued him. Commanded by the Subahdar of the province, the assassins forced their way into the castle, where Shîr met them in arms, and, though single-handed,

fell not before he had sacrificed several of the miscreants to his just revenge, and among the rest the base Subahdar himself. When the murder had been committed, and Nurmahal conducted to the palace, Jehânghîr had bestowed his worthless heart upon another; so that the woman for whom he had soiled his conscience with blood, was during four years permitted to languish in his harem in neglect and indigence. He afterwards, it is true, returned to this unfortunate creature, and his passion for her, material and gross as it was, in default of better subjects, has been seized on and celebrated by the poets, as if it had really been ennobled by lofty sentiments and unalterable constancy. Nurmahal herself appears, in many respects, to have been in her youth worthy of her first husband: though incapable of wielding the dagger of the queen of Ganore, her virtues were neither few nor despicable. Her affections were in the grave, but she exerted whatever intelligence she possessed in the cause of her natural friends and the country in general, and enjoyed the satisfaction which arises from doing good.

Among the events of this reign may be remarked the arrival of Sir Thomas Roe at the court of Agra. He was a man peculiarly well fitted to influence a sovereign like Jehânghîr, who was charmed by his engaging manners, and struck by the useful and varied knowledge which he displayed. His mission was productive of considerable advantages to the East India Company. The impatient activity of the Afghans shortly afterwards produced a civil war in the north; ambition effected the same purpose in Bengal and Behar; and in Rajpootana the princes of Mewar recommenced the long-continued struggle for independence. These wars, which, like the fires of a volcano, now burned with impetuous violence, and now appeared to be for ever extinct, were continually

renewed at intervals, without producing any remarkable visible result, though secretly they were undermining the power of both Mogol and Hindoo, and preparing the way for a new race of conquerors, by whose arms the mighty empire of Acbar was to be reduced to the rank of a province or colony. Jehânghîr, goaded, perhaps, by the stings of conscience, was continually moving from city to city, generally accompanied by the English ambassador, who, in the extravagance of his admiration at the splendour of the court, the vast extent of the cities, and the exhaustless wealth of the country, could never, in the wildest flights of his imagination, have conceived that the day was at hand when all that he admired would become an integral part of the British empire, risen to a height of grandeur unknown before in the annals of the world, uniting a fourth part of the human race under its sway, invincible on the ocean, dreaded every where on land, influencing almost despotically the movements of civilization, unrivalled in the arts of life, spreading her language and her literature over half the earth, and, in short, acting like the soul animating and impelling at will the mighty frame of society. Even at that period the Indian ocean was not unconscious of English valour. Already had the Portuguese began to experience the difference between the natives of Malabar and the hardy mariners of the north; and the Hindoos, who detested their bigoted conquerors, beheld with delight the apparition of a superior nation.

The reign of Jehânghîr was again troubled, in 1621, by the rebellion of his son Shah Jehân. The parricidal rebel was quickly defeated; but constantly renewed his attempts in Rajpootana, Orissa, and Bengal. At length, however, fortune wholly deserted him, and, in spite of all his efforts, no chance of safety remained but in the forgiveness of his father.

He therefore wrote in the most submissive style to the emperor, who received his submission on certain terms, one of which was that he should deliver up his three sons, Dârâ, Murad, and Aurang-zîb (commonly called Aurungzebe) as hostages. The conditions were accepted, and peace once more restored. But these internal troubles had laid open the empire to the attacks of foreign enemies. The king of Persia besieged and took Candahar, Caubul fell into the hands of the Uzbeks, and fresh enemies were springing up on every side. Over the Uzbeks, however, the arms of the Mogols, conducted by Mohâbet Khân, obtained a complete triumph; but receiving, on his return from this victorious campaign, indignities instead of rewards, he seized upon the person of the emperor, now grown old and feeble, and compelled him to do justice to his deserts. But Mohâbet had excited the hatred of Nurmahal, now corrupted by a court life, and with age grown ambitious and vindictive; and this perverted woman put in practice every secret art of persuasion to obtain the proscription of this faithful veteran warrior, who was at length, in defence of his own life, driven to join Shah Jehân in a new attempt at rebellion. But the death of the emperor, in 1627, rendered the execution of their project unnecessary: Shah Jehân succeeded to the throne.

The new reign commenced, as usual, with numerous sanguinary executions. All the emperor's relations, his sons excepted, were immediately butchered, this being the line of policy pursued from time immemorial in the East, and so vehemently approved of by historians, that Humaioon, who preferred a different course, appears culpably negligent in their eyes. The sons of the emperor now returned to court, where their various characters gave rise to various conjectures; but Aurang-zîb, then only ten

years old, seems to have excited the greatest curiosity and attention. Shah Jehân appeared to have exhausted all the venom of his character upon his brothers and nephews; towards others he was mild and clement: and his ambition having attained its object, he no longer experienced the thirst of conquest or the taste for civil broils. He therefore directed his attention to the means of increasing his people's happiness. But the great Musulman chiefs of India had been too long accustomed to war and rebellion to regard a state of peace as any way desirable, and their inordinate ambition, nourished by the vast vicissitudes which they beheld, quickly renewed the customary state of things. The emperor too, departing from the policy of his father, in this respect highly prudent, increased the public disorder by persecuting the religion of the Hindoos, until, taught at length by defeats and disasters, he discovered "that a prince who would possess subjects should respect their faith." Having renounced this unjust undertaking, his next step was to chastise the insolent usurpations and cruelties of the Portuguese in Bengal. In 1633, Aurang-zîb made his first essay in arms against the rebellious Rajah of Bundelkund, and on this occasion exhibited the same daring and perseverance which distinguished him in after life. Mohâbet undertook the conquest of the Dekkan, which, having completed, he was proceeding to add that of Golconda, when death put a stop to his victories, and Aurang-zîb was appointed to succeed him.

The period was now fast approaching, when inordinate ambition, and fratricidal jealousy, was to kindle those celebrated wars between the sons of Shah Jehân, which hastened the decline, and prepared the overthrow of the Mogol empire in India. These contests were conducted with unexampled ferocity. Whoever should have proved victor, would probably

have acted with rigour towards the vanquished; but fortune ranged itself on the side of the most unprincipled; or rather, the genius of Aurang-zîb, fertile, flexible, profound, triumphed over the more feeble characters of his brothers, whom he pursued with unrelenting atrocity, playing off one against an other, until all were cut off or reduced. However, before matters had been carried thus far, his policy found it necessary to make his father prisoner. The old man, indeed, is reported to have invited him to the palace with the design of seizing upon, or murdering him; but this forms no apology for the conduct of the son, whose ungovernable ambition would have found or forged other pretexts. His principal enemies being thus deprived of power, Aurang-zîb ascended the throne with the semblance of many virtues, but possessing none but prudence. With respect to Shah Jehân, who now sunk to rise no more, it may be said that he was distinguished by many good qualities; excepting towards his own relations, he was not cruel; he ardently desired the love of his people, and made constant exertions to obtain it; though addicted to pleasure, he could, on urgent occasions, master his propensities, and devote himself to business; he administered justice with impartiality; and adorned all these good qualities by the accomplishments of a scholar and a gentleman. On the other hand, his vices were neither trifling nor few. He was indolent, voluptuous, a slave to his favourites; a religious persecutor, without the excuse of fanaticism.

Aurang-zîb, the successor of Shah Jehân, now put in practice all the arts and resources of his mind in order to defeat and destroy his brothers. Murad he had already imprisoned; next Shujâ, then Dârâ fell; lastly his aged father perished in prison—it has been suspected by poison. These events were followed by

the appearance of Sevaji, who founded a new empire on the coast of Malabar (that of the Mahrattas); by war with Persia, caused by the erroneous superscription of a letter; by the revolt of the Afghans, who were defeated and cut to pieces in one battle. Next, as if to repay the tyrant for his parricidal enterprises against his father, Acbar, one of his youngest sons, being intrusted with the management of the war against the Rajpoots, raised the standard of rebellion, and after an unsuccessful attempt in Rajast'han, took refuge with the Mahratta chief, Sambaji, the son of Sevaji. This, joined with other motives, determined Aurang-zîb to accomplish the conquest of the Dekkan, an undertaking which had often appeared to be completed, but was always to begin anew. The king of Golconda submitted without a struggle; Beejapoor was subdued by famine; and the youthful Sultan Acbar, terrified at the near approach of his father, fled into Persia. Unsatisfied with the submission of the king of Golconda, the emperor, now delivered from his other foes, proceeded to attack him as an enemy, and treachery at length placed this sovereign in his hands. Shortly after this, Sambaji, the chief of the Mahrattas, was surprised while engaged in a party of pleasure, and conducted as a captive into the presence of Aurang-zîb, who commanded him to be slaughtered before his eyes. The Mahrattas themselves, however, were as far as ever from being subdued. Issuing from their mountain fastnesses, they not only devastated with fire and sword the newly conquered provinces of Golconda and Beejapoor, but extended their ravages into Berar, Khandeish, and Malwah, whence they returned into their own country laden with immense plunder. Whenever they encountered the Mogol armies in the field, their irregular valour was generally found unequal to contend with disciplined veteran troops; but these occasions were few,

and while the emperor exhausted his resources in attacking a few of their least defensible places, they continually employed themselves in amassing plunder, and preparing themselves for future combats. Such was the state of things during the last years of the reign of Aurang-zîb, who expired at Ahmednagar, Feb. 21st, 1707, in the ninety-fourth year of his age, and forty-eighth of his reign.

Shah Alam, (commonly called Shah Aulum,) his eldest son, succeeded to the throne, though not without a contest with his younger brothers, in which they perished. The new emperor, on his accession, immediately abandoned to others the conducting of the war in the Dekkan; but was meditating an expedition against the Rajpoots, who were, in fact, never thoroughly subdued, when his whole attention was demanded by the Sikhs, a new power, rapidly risen to greatness, who were ravaging the provinces of Lahore and Delhi. Against this people the emperor proceeded in person, and his success was so complete that the Sikhs, defeated and humiliated, were constrained to take refuge in the mountains. Three years after this event Shah Alam suddenly expired, 1712, in his camp near Lahore, leaving behind him four sons, each possessing treasures and an army, with the ambition to aspire to supreme command. A civil war necessarily ensued, in which, after a brief contest, Moizz-eddin, the eldest brother, was victorious. But his triumph was short. Having, by his vices and feeble character, alienated the affections of his people, he was in his turn attacked and conquered by his nephew Farrukh-sir, who then ascended the throne, still reeking with the blood of his uncle.

Farrukh-sir, a prince no less sanguinary than imbecile, signalized his accession to the throne by the murder of all those from whom he apprehended danger;

after which he abandoned the reins of government to his favourites, two Syeds, by whose active services he had obtained the empire, bestowing on Hassan the title of Emir-al-Omarâ, or "chief of the nobles," and on Abdallah that of vizir. The wicked, however, seldom agree in the partition of the fruits of their crimes. No extent of power could satisfy the ambition of the Syeds, whose invasions of the imperial authority grew daily more and more audacious, while the emperor's patience, decreasing with his influence, became in the same proportion less capable of enduring these encroachments. Both the emperor and his favourites, therefore, perceiving that their interests were diverse and incompatible, began from that moment to concert measures for their own security, which almost necessarily implied the destruction of the opposite party. Farrukh-sir commenced those movements designed to compass the removal of the Syeds by the appointment of Hassan to the office of governor of the Dekkan. At the same time secret orders were conveyed to Daood Khan Pani, governor of Guzerat, to assail and cut off the Syed. Daood was an Afghan of prodigious bodily strength, undoubted courage, and considerable prudence; and his enterprise had the still further support of Neemaji Sindia, a Mahratta chief in the imperial service. But a musket ball, which struck the Afghan almost in the moment of success, turned the tide of victory in favour of Hassan; and for this time deprived the emperor of the gratification of his revenge. To console him in some degree for his misfortune, his general commanding in the north obtained a great victory over the Sikhs, whose chief was taken and tortured to death. In the south, however, the Mahratta power continually augmented, while the resources of the empire, divided by sanguinary factions, who employed, for the satisfaction of their private resent-

ments, what should have served to secure the public weal, were every day decreasing, and splitting into still smaller fractions. The sole aim of Farrukh-sir, during his whole reign, appeared to be to destroy the Syeds; but in madly attempting to compass their ruin he brought about his own. Hassan, alarmed by the representations of his brother, marched upon the capital at the head of a powerful army, when Farrukh-sir, base in adversity as he had been elated in success, threw himself on the mercy of the brothers. Whether they at first intended or not to depose him is uncertain; but the tumults which now arose in the city quickly determined them to this step. Farrukh-sir was dragged forth from his harem and thrown into prison, while Rafî-ad-Dirjat, a grandson of Aurang-zîb, was placed upon the throne. This prince, during whose reign Farrukh-sir perished in prison, died of consumption in five months; and was succeeded by his younger brother Rafî ad-Daulah, who in three months followed his brother to the grave.

Mohammed Shah, the prince who next filled the throne, was grandson of Shah Alam. He began his reign at the age of seventeen, in 1720, and at first evinced the most perfect submission to the will of the Syeds. But their ruin was speedily resolved on. The instrument which offered itself for the effecting of this desirable purpose, was Nizâm-al-Mulk, governor of Malwah, who determined on the removal of Hassan in the first place. The bold but haughty and presumptuous Syed was assassinated in his tent; his brother defeated and taken prisoner; and the emperor, on reaching his capital after these events, hailed as if he had only then begun to reign. His feeble voluptuous character, however, soon influenced the nature of the administration. Rebellions arose in the provinces; disorders in the finances. The

palace was filled with dissolute revellers. But the arrival of the new vizir, Nizâm-al-Mulk, it was hoped, would put a stop to all these irregularities. The vizir's character, vigorous, enterprising, severe, was indeed well calculated to give rise to such expectations; but the temper of the emperor himself prevented their fulfilment: for by permitting his gay companions to turn the person and counsels of his minister into ridicule, he deprived himself of his services. Nizâm-al-Mulk retired into the Dekkan, where, enjoying a sort of precarious independence, he secretly favoured the designs of the Mahrattas. During the reign of this despicable prince took place the celebrated plundering expedition of Nadir Shah into Hindoostan. The imperial forces, participating in the pusillanimity of their sovereign, were speedily put to flight, the capital was taken without resistance, and the inhabitants, who on a false report of the conqueror's death, rose in arms against the Persians, were inhumanly massacred. Having retained during thirty-seven days possession of Delhi, Nadir restored the throne to Mohammed, and retraced his footsteps into Persia. This irruption of the Persians into Hindoostan took place in 1739. Six years after Nadir's expedition, Ali Mohammed Khan, founder of the Rohilla power, established himself in India. The invasion of the Abdallis followed in 1747. The accidental explosion of a magazine of rockets and ammunition in their camp, which spread terror and confusion through the army, for a season saved the empire from their ravages, as immediately after this event they marched back into Caubul. This was the last occurrence of the reign of Mohammed Shah, who, exhausted by the use of opium and other pleasures, expired on receiving the agreeable intelligence in the forty-ninth year of his age.

The crown now descended without opposition to

Ahmed Shah, his eldest son. During the brief reig
of this prince, the Abdallis and Rohillas continue
their encroachments in northern India, while th
Mahratta empire in the south daily acquired add
tional vigour and sway. In 1753, however, Ahme
Shah was dethroned and blinded by Ghàzi-ud-dî
grandson of Nizâm-al-Mulk, who raised to the thro
Alamghir II., son of the late Moizz-eddîn. The i
vasions of the Abdallis now became more freque
and terrible, large contributions were exacted from th
wretched empire, whole provinces were laid wast
while the sovereign, sitting despised and powerle
on his throne, like an image of a king, beheld the ti
of devastation roll around him, and wear away th
crumbling foundations of his sway. At length th
dagger of a Cashmerian delivered him from this sta
of ignominy, and his body was thrown out, like
dead dog, on the strand of the Jumna. Kam Bakhs
the youngest son of Aurang-zîb, succeeded to th
unreal throne. Meanwhile Abdallis, Rohillas, Mah
rattas, Sikhs, animated by the lust of plunder, or i
a restless ambition, disturbed with their clamorou
pretensions what may very justly be termed the exp
ing moments of the empire. The crown was place
for a moment on the brows of Shah Alam the secon
in 1760, who quickly sunk into the character of
pensioner of the East India Company; and th
Mogol Empire in India was at an end.

Of the history of the European establishments
India we can here give no account: from the ye
1760, the history of Hindoostan must be regarde
as a branch of the history of England, of which
in fact forms one of the most remarkable portion
That it has hitherto been excluded from the list
popular studies is to be imputed, partly to the sty
in which it has generally been enveloped, partly
the prevalent taste for light and frivolous com position

The English, so long lords paramount in Hindoostan, have scarcely yet begun at home to reflect upon the splendour of their empire. Such as have not, by accidental circumstances, been forced upon the study of the institutions and people of India, generally, in truth, regard the subject with an indolent disdain, as something barbarous, commercial, below the attention of a gentleman. But this is merely an excuse for persevering in a truly barbarous ignorance of one of the most remarkable nations and countries on the globe. There is nothing in the history of European despotisms which should lead us, under any view of the matter, to prefer it as an object of study to the history of India, which, whatever may be its geographical position, is now, as much as Surrey or Middlesex, a part of the British Empire. If in reading history amusement alone be sought, nothing can more abundantly furnish it than the recital of the actions of that amazing series of barbarous conquerors who have succeeded each other on that extraordinary scene. If we desire to render a knowledge of history subservient to a more philosophical appreciation of human nature, we have, in the invincible perseverance and passive resistance of the Hindoos, examples of the force of opinions in influencing the destinies of mankind more singularly striking than are furnished by the history of any other people, if we, perhaps, except the Jews. The present work, if it effect no more, may possibly serve, other causes co-operating, to direct the attention of a certain portion of the public to India and the Hindoos. We have endeavoured, in our reduction of the vast picture, to exhibit a true likeness of the people and country. The outline will, we trust, be found, on examination, to convey a faithful impression. We aim at no more. Into the minuter details it was foreign to our purpose, as it was beyond

our power, to enter. The reader who shall hav
made himself master of the subject thus far, will l
fully competent to enter on the study of the origin
authorities; in proportion to his progress in whi
will, we are persuaded, be the strength of his co
viction in the truth and honesty of our views.

THE END.

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